ECLECTIC READINGS

HOMERIC STORIES

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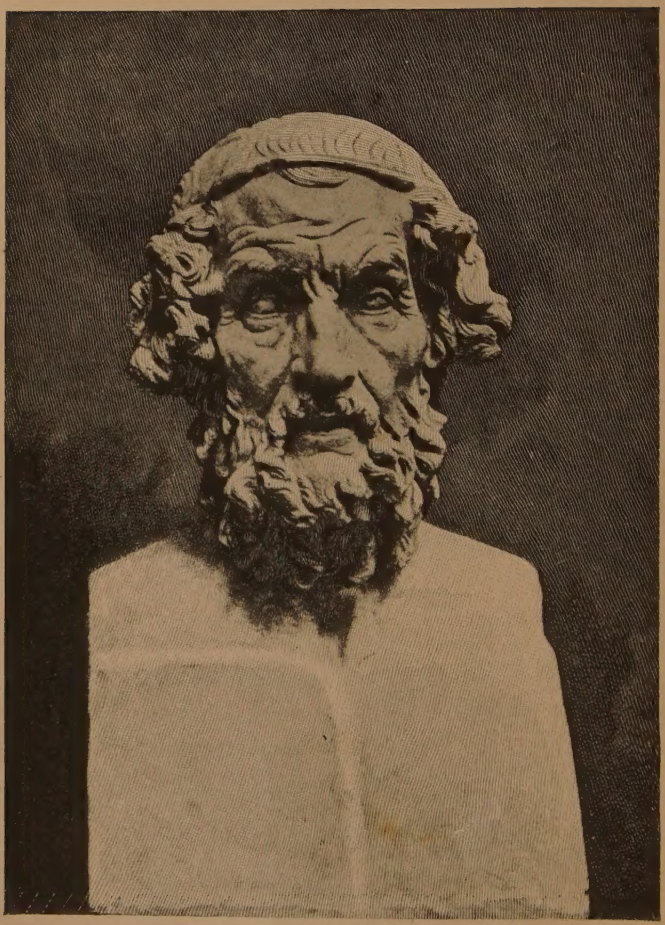

HOMER. *Frontispiece.*

ECLECTIC SCHOOL READINGS

HOMERIC STORIES

FOR YOUNG READERS

BY

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PREFACE

THE following stories, selected from Homer's inexhaustible supply, have been prepared to aid those not familiar with them in the original.

Few have access to translations of Homer, and, even where translations can be secured, young pupils find it difficult to make a connected narrative from the widely scattered material. Then, too, many teachers have given little or no attention to the study of Homer, so that they do not always find it easy to explain to their pupils the numerous references and allusions found in both classical and current literature.

It is hoped that the following chapters may prove entertaining and profitable reading for the children and a fruitful source of material for teachers.

Part Second, or the stories from the "Odyssey," will naturally appeal to young readers more strongly than Part First. Homer, in his account of the wanderings of Ulysses, has given much greater variety of incident than was possible in narrating the battle's din. Strange monsters of land and sea and places unthought of by common minds will ever delight the imagination.

The author takes no credit to himself for any merit the stories possess. Homer is the real author, for he has supplied the ideas, and his limitless imagination has painted the pictures. The author has but put these thoughts into English. If he has succeeded in placing these pure and highly imaginative tales within the reach of the young, his purpose is fulfilled.

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PART I.

STORIES OF THE TROJAN WAR.

I. THE CAUSE OF THE TROJAN WAR.

PELEUS was the king of a famous city in Greece. By many battles with man and beast, he had won great renown. When rumor whispered, "Peleus is to marry the sea nymph, Thetis," the excitement was intense, and everybody was eager to attend the wedding. Of course the gods and goddesses were to be present, for the occasion was one to call together the greatest of earth and sky.

Whether it was intentional or not we can not say, but somehow the goddess Discord received no invitation to the feast. Now this goddess was ever prone to cause trouble, and the more she thought about the slight that had been offered her, the angrier she became, until her heart was set upon revenge. Night and day she brooded over plans, until she hit upon one that was as base as even she could wish.

The wedding day at last was come. The guests were making merry with jest and song and tale, when suddenly there came a sharp cry, "To the fairest," and a beautiful golden apple was thrown into the midst of them.

In a moment gladness ceased, and strife began; for each goddess was positive the apple belonged to her, as each felt sure that none other was so fair as herself. The dispute lasted long and was bitter, but neither fierce words, nor frantic gestures, nor softly flowing tears seemed to avail; the question was still unsettled. The gods, meanwhile, looked on with lively interest, but dared not speak a word of preference, lest, while one goddess might thus be pleased, all others should be angered.

Now there lived in far-away Troy a young shepherd whose name was Paris. He was famous for manly beauty, and he was of royal parentage, being the son of Priam, king of Troy. To him Mercury led the fair goddesses, that he might decide which was the fairest, and therefore the worthiest to possess the precious apple. Most had retired from the contest, weary and in despair, but three persisted in pushing their claims — Juno, the wife of Jupiter, Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, and Venus, the goddess of love. Not content with permitting Paris to decide as he thought best, they invented many schemes by which to bribe him and sway his judgment. Juno promised, if he would decide in her favor, to make him the ruler over Asia and the possessor of its great wealth; Minerva offered glory and renown in war; and Venus tempted him by

PARIS. (13)

saying that he should have for his wife the most beautiful woman in Greece.

Paris hesitated for a long time, conscious that he could please but one. To Venus at last he gave the prize and thus gained her favor; but at the same time he greatly offended Juno and Minerva, who ever after hated him and Troy, his home, and all his people. Meanwhile, Discord smiled contentedly at thought of the mischief she was preparing.

Venus had promised to Paris the most beautiful woman in Greece. Now Helen was everywhere admitted to be the queen of beauty, and she was already the devoted wife of Menelaus, king of Sparta. Venus, however, was determined to fulfill her promise, and she shrewdly persuaded Menelaus to invite Paris to his home that he might learn about Greece and about her valorous people.

Paris came as bidden, and soon was deeply in love with Helen. Have her he must. So, guided by Venus's wisdom, he praised and flattered and entreated until he won the heart once centered upon her husband.

About this time a war in Crete demanded the aid of Menelaus, and he was absent from Sparta several weeks. Meanwhile the artful Paris induced Helen to sail with him to his far-off home, with jewels and rare treasures gathered from the palace.

ABDUCTION OF HELEN. (15)

The people of Troy rejoiced at her arrival, for her beauty was marvelous. Still, some wise men shook their heads in doubt, fearful lest this theft of another's wife might breed some future woe.

When Menelaus returned from Crete and found his wife away, and costly presents stolen, his rage and sorrow were dreadful, because his love for her had been unchanging. He roamed about his lonely house and gazed at this and that reminder of his wife, while tears like April's copious showers rained down his furrowed cheeks. Again, he raved and prayed the gods to give him vengeance; to strengthen his right arm till it should strike to death this Paris who had brought a blight upon his lordly home.

After many days of stormy anger, he vowed that he would gather such an army as the world had never seen, and, going to that far-famed Troy, would lay it low, enslave the people, and, triumphant, bring his Helen back.

What added greater courage was his confidence in Juno and Minerva, for well he knew that they would be glad to aid him in his efforts to humble Paris. Another thing was in his favor: Helen, before her marriage to him, had had many noble suitors, the most powerful princes of Greece. To show their loyalty to her, most of these had taken

oath to defend her honor and to assist her husband should he ever need their aid.

Menelaus and his brother Agamemnon now called upon these princes to remember their vow; they gathered a vast army and sailed for Troy, and there a war was begun which lasted ten years. This famous conflict is called the Trojan War. Just when it occurred we do not know, but there are many stories of its battles and its heroes. Some of the best of these stories we mean now to tell you.

II. THE STRATAGEM OF ULYSSES.

Among the many suitors who had sworn to defend Helen and her husband, the one, indeed, who proposed the scheme, was Ulysses, the noble ruler of the island of Ithaca. Being then young and impulsive, he did not think of the consequences that such a pledge might bring about.

Several years had passed. Ulysses had married Penelope, a cousin of Helen's, and was the father of a baby boy upon whom were centered his fondest hopes. His family and his kingdom so filled his mind that he had small concern for war or for other people's quarrels. The rash vow of his earlier years never troubled him. But, though partially forgotten, the memory of it was awakened by a shock, when one day there came startling news, "Helen has been carried away to Troy, and all who promised to defend her are bidden to hasten to her rescue."

Day after day these words were repeated in his hearing. Nor could he refuse to listen to them. What gave him most anxiety was not the insult to Greece, but the fear that he might be forced to leave the land and the friends he loved.

Meanwhile Agamemnon, the brother of Menelaus, was busy collecting an army. He felt that he must have the help of Ulysses, for that young king was not only brave in war but was noted for his cunning as well as for his wealth. Therefore he sent Palamedes to summon the manly chief, allowing neither excuse, nor protest, nor pleading to interfere.

One morning a herald arrived at the palace of Ulysses, running with feet as swift as wings, and calling out in breathless words, "Palamedes from Agamemnon is even now within the king's domain!"

Ulysses at once decided to act the part of a crazy man, that thus he might be let alone. Hitching a horse and an ox together, he plowed his field, and, as he went along, he made wild gestures and scattered salt on every side as if he thought he was sowing grain.

This was a cunning trick, but Palamedes was not deceived by it. A nurse stood in the field, holding in her arms the little child of Ulysses, for the father always had him near. Without a word Palamedes took the infant from the nurse's arms and placed it in the furrow. The father stopped his ill-matched team as he drew near his child and turned it sharply around that no injury might be done him. This

ULYSSES FEIGNING MADNESS.

thoughtful act showed plainly that his insanity was only feigned. So with many sighs and tears, Ulysses was forced to bid his home and his wife and child a sad farewell and, in company with Palamedes, join the host of Agamemnon.

III. ULYSSES FINDS ACHILLES.

King Peleus and the sea nymph, Thetis, had a son who was destined to be famous early in life. They named the boy Achilles.

His father thought about nothing but renown in war for him, while his mother yearned to have him immortal like herself. To make his life unending she anointed his body with ambrosia each morning, and nightly covered him up with fire to burn out the mortal part.

One night Peleus found him thus buried in the coals and rescued him in terror. That the lad might escape like treatment in the future, he placed him under the care of Chiron, a noted trainer of warriors. Chiron fed him on the hearts of lions and the marrow of bears to make him fierce and strong.

Achilles was soon a dashing rider. Then, too, none of equal age aimed so true as he, none took so many risks when after game. He was powerful in body, apt in mind, and of undaunted courage.

As he neared manhood the mother sought to turn his mind from warlike deeds. She was in

dread of this prophetic saying, "His life must be short if glorious, but he may reach to a good old age if satisfied with common things." To wean him from thoughts of war, she disguised him as a girl and sent him to live with the daughters of a king on the island of Scyros. Several years he stayed in that quiet place, no one knowing where he was.

Now Calchas, a famous seer or soothsayer, had declared that Troy could not be taken without the help of Achilles, son of Thetis. So, when the chiefs of Greece were preparing for the war, they searched everywhere to find the young man whose service was so essential. Of course Thetis would not tell where he was. She well knew that if he should hear what Calchas had said about him, nothing could prevent his joining in the war against the Trojans.

At length Ulysses was sent out to seek for him. Of all the heroes, he was the one best fitted for such an errand. After weeks of useless effort he learned that Achilles was hidden on the island of Scyros. Taking a band of comrades, he approached the king's palace. When a short distance from the gate he said to them: "Wait here a few minutes. Then raise a fearful shout, clash your shields together, and brandish your spears, that those within

may think the building is assaulted. Trust the rest to Ulysses."

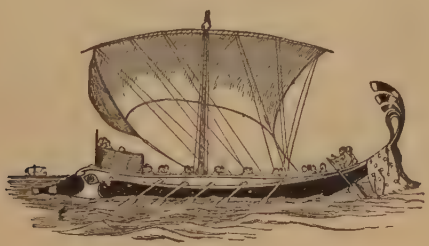
In the guise of a peddler, he readily gained admittance to the garden where the girls were walking. He rested his shield and spear close by the gate, and proceeded to show such things as young ladies are often glad to buy — mantles, ribbons, and silver ornaments. In the group was one who, though smooth of face, looked older and more rugged than the rest. Ulysses thought that in his eye he saw the fire of Achilles. As the girls crowded around, examining and bargaining with laughter and good-natured banter, suddenly were heard outside a mighty shout and clang of arms. Instantly they scattered in every direction, shrieking as they ran, all save one. This one forgot his woman's garb, forgot to step as women step. Throwing aside his cloak, he walked with quick but manly stride to where the peddler's armor lay, snatched the spear, adjusted the shield, and prepared alone to defend the palace.

Ulysses knew now that it was Achilles who stood before him. He grasped the hand of the young hero, and with earnest words addressed him: "Noble son of noble parents, Greece stands in need of thee. Without thine aid Troy can not be taken. I come to summon thee to the war. Glory waits

for thee. Go, gather thy men, collect thy ships, and come with us, fighting in a most just cause."

Gladly did Achilles obey the call. The discipline of his youth now served him well. He summoned the Myrmidons, his father's famous warriors, and bade them make ready to serve him in a great conflict beyond the sea. From every side they flocked to him, for all had confidence in the valiant son of Thetis. Fifty ships, each with a crew of fifty men, soon lay at anchor, waiting his word to start. The wealth of old King Peleus was willingly placed at his disposal.

Thus Achilles brought his forces to the aid of Menelaus and the Greeks. While, perhaps, the youngest of all their chieftains, he proved to be their boldest warrior. During the ten years' war that followed, he ravaged the country around Troy, and overthrew twenty-three strong cities that opposed him.



GREEK SHIP.

IV. THE SACRIFICE OF IPHIGENIA.

As fast as the ships were fitted out and manned, they reported at Aulis in Bœotia. This was a central point for Greece; moreover the harbor was spacious and the island of Eubœa was a defense against heavy winds. The fleet daily grew until the ships numbered by the hundred, and the thousands of warriors were impatient for the day when the sails should be spread for Troy.

Coming, as they did, from widely scattered places, the heroes had many different ways of doing and living; but all believed in the power and guidance of the gods. So, every day, altars blazed with sacrificial fires as they tried to learn the secrets of the future.

It was in connection with one of these daily acts of worship that a strange sight was seen. An ox had been sacrificed. The warriors had watched the fire consume the flesh of the animal and had followed the smoke slowly ascending or circling around; the entrails, also, had been examined to see if in any of these things there might be found some message from the gods.

AN OFFERING TO THE GODS. (27)

As they were about to scatter to their tents, a snake, "blood-red upon its back," crawled from beneath the altar and glided toward a plane tree. In dumb amazement they watched it begin to climb the tree. At other times a hundred hands would have dealt it instant death, but now each one restrained himself, thinking here must be some hidden meaning.

The creature did not climb aimlessly, as they who watched soon learned, for, cuddled in a nest, on the topmost branch, were eight young birds. As the dreaded snake drew near, the timid things sent forth cries, piteous to hear. Meanwhile the anxious mother flew hither and thither, distracted by the danger that threatened her nestlings. But the snake did not pause, nor so much as turn its head until, at the edge of the nest, stretching its long neck and opening wide its jaws, it gulped down bird after bird. Below upon the ground, the warriors, with many "Ohs" and "Ahs," counted "One," "Two," "Three," "Four," even up to "Eight."

The mother bird's fright became intense as she saw her brood destroyed, and in her extremity she flew, screaming, straight at the foe. The horrid thing had expected this, for, quickly springing, it seized her also. Completing its meal of nine, it

slowly crept to earth, but scarce had reached the ground when Jupiter transformed it to a stone to lie, for ages, a lifeless image.

Astonished, the warriors stood more puzzled than before, until wise Calchas spake: "My friends, look not so dazed. 'Tis a portent of the future which Jupiter hath sent. The meaning of the thing is this: As the snake ate nine birds, so nine full years shall we lay siege and fight about the Trojan walls, but in the tenth Troy shall surely fall."

GREEK SOLDIER.

They listened as he spoke; in part accepted what he said; in part did not believe. That Troy should fall was clear, but the time seemed far too long, although the seer had said, "Ulysses shall not see his home for twenty years."

And now the expected ships had come and all were ready, but from morn till eve, and from eve till morn again, they looked in vain for winds to fill their sails. The Greeks marveled at the calm till the word went round: "The king hath slain Diana's stag. Nor shall the favoring breeze waft

forth our ships till on the altar Iphigenia, Agamemnon's child, repay the wrong."

When the rumor was confirmed by Calchas, there was distress on every hand. Agamemnon felt that he could not shed the blood of his innocent daughter, whom he dearly loved, while the Greeks maintained that he must obey Diana's word.

He tried countless schemes to appease the goddess and yet save his child, but all in vain; the winds refused to blow and the Greeks grew more and more impatient. Finally he yielded to the ceaseless demands of his people and wrote a letter to his wife at Argos, bidding her come to Aulis with Iphigenia, as he wished to marry their daughter to the hero Achilles.

Soon the happy Iphigenia appears only to learn that, instead of becoming the bride of Achilles, she is to be slain upon the altar, a sacrifice to appease the offended Diana. She is placed upon the altar, the priest lifts the knife, when suddenly a cloud surrounds the victim, and Iphigenia is borne away by Diana to Tauris, and in her place lies a doe, slain in her stead.

The Greeks marvel greatly; but Diana is satisfied, for the winds begin to blow, the sails are spread, and the Grecian fleet glides proudly from the harbor.

Nothing now impedes their progress, and soon the ships cast anchor on the shores of Troy, and the heroes begin that famous siege which is to furnish subjects for more stories of courage and strange experiences than any other war of any time.

V. THE QUARREL BETWEEN AGAMEMNON AND ACHILLES.

You must bear in mind that the Trojan War differed from a war in our times in many ways. The weapons used were few and simple — arrows and spears for long range, short swords for close quarters; while for defense, in addition to their armor of mail, the warriors had shields which they hung upon their left arms by means of straps.

The Greeks could not convey food from their distant home land, and were therefore compelled to supply their wants from the country in which they were fighting. This they did by driving the native farmers within the city's walls and using the fertile plains for their own needs. Here they planted and harvested year after year.

The neighboring cities gave aid to Troy, as was natural, and the opposing army was large — too large for the Greeks to subdue readily. With the help of these allies provisions reached the citadel in spite of the Greeks surrounding it, yet the enemy were not strong enough to drive the Greeks from the plains.

Many battles were fought. But, although the Greeks were often victorious, still the frowning fortress stood a menace to the Greeks, a pride to King Priam and his helpers.

Nine years had come and gone, one for each bird devoured by the snake. In fact the tenth was well along in months, and the invading host was losing hope of ever taking the battlements, when a still sadder thing added to their discouragement — a

DAGGER FOUND AT MYCENAE.

plague broke out within their ranks. But none could tell the cause, nor for it find a cure.

The Greeks perished by hundreds, nor could they consume the bodies of the dead with fires fed both night and day. Though prayers were offered, praises sung, and smoke of incense rose, still for nine most fearful days nothing stayed the hand of death.

On the tenth day Achilles gave command for all the men of note to meet for counsel, for when disaster befell the Greeks they were wont to think

they had offended some god who thus made his displeasure known.

Now, among all that were gathered there, only Calchas understood the cause. When this was known all urged him to explain. He hesitated, asked to be excused, and declared he would not speak a word, for what he had to say was sure to bring him woe.

At last, when Achilles pledged his solemn oath that not a soul should do him harm, he boldly said: "Agamemnon, the king, is to blame for this. Apollo thus avenges insult; nor will the archer god stay his poisoned darts till Chryseis again is free." Consternation reigned. "What fearful words to say about one's king! But if the words be true — then what?"

Calchas then told them what only he and Agamemnon knew. Some weeks before, the daughter of a priest had been taken captive. Agamemnon had chosen her as his own, for her beauty and grace were attractive. With this choice no fault was found. But when her father came, with staff and wreath of Apollo, demanding back his daughter and in Apollo's name proffered a splendid ransom, then Agamemnon refused to recognize the command of Apollo, and drove the priest from his presence. Chryseis, the daughter, he kept; yet the fact remained a secret.

Achilles was the first to see that the only course to take was at once to send Chryseis back to her father, and with her a goodly sacrifice. He hoped thus to appease Apollo's wrath. Thinking this, he bravely told his thought.

One would expect Agamemnon to accept in kindly spirit the advice of stanch Achilles; yet he replied in rage: "I'll take thy counsel, my friend, and return the girl to her father; but Bryseis, thine own cherished prize, shall leave thy fair tent to-morrow to be the adornment of mine. Thus wilt thou comprehend how much I lose in Chryseis."

Achilles heard the threat and knew the king would make it good. "To be treated thus!" was uppermost in his mind. "To be treated thus by this man for whom I have done so much! I hate the very ground he walks upon. Shall I draw my sword and thrust him through? No, I must not slay my king. Of course I must submit, but still I'll speak my mind." Then, turning to the king, he spoke: "And is this thy gratitude? Who has fought for thee as I? Who killed so many in battle? Who captured equal booty? Who taken so many cities? Thou robber! glutton! drunkard! Thinkest thou thy army no longer needs Achilles? Of this thou shalt have proof, for, by Apollo, I will strike no blow henceforth for Aga-

ACHILLES DEPRIVED OF BRYSEIS.

memnon. Look neither to me nor to my Myrmidons for further help, for we shall lift no arm till on thy knees thou plead with many tears."

With these words he dashed his golden-studded sword to earth and stalked from the assembly, his face as dark as a tempest.

Away he went, far from the Grecian camp, until he came to the ocean beach. There he seated himself and stretched his arms out toward the sea, earnestly calling his mother Thetis. She heard his voice, and, rising from the sea like a mist, she sat by his side and comforted him by assuring him that the Greeks should meet with failure until they returned his prize, and Agamemnon humbly begged his pardon for the wrongs that he had wrought.

VI. THERSITES, THE FAULT-FINDER.

Twelve days Achilles sulked in his tent. Meanwhile Chryseis had reached her father's house, and Apollo had stopped the plague. The fair Bryseis had been taken from Achilles, and now dwelt in Agamemnon's tent, as the king had said she must.

Jupiter had spent these days at a feast in Æthiopia. Thetis met him on his return, and insisted that he punish the king for the ill treatment of her son.

Now Jupiter was always inclined to favor "Thetis of the sea," for she was winning in her manners. So, as hitherto, he promised to do what she asked, and humble the proud spirit of the king.

All the following night, while gods and mortals slept, he tossed upon his bed, wakeful and burdened with care, trying to invent some scheme by which to keep his pledge. "The only way it can be done," he reasoned, "is to defeat the Greeks in battle until they appeal to Achilles. I'll send a deceitful dream to Agamemnon as he slumbers, and fill his mind with what his army can do upon the morrow. He will try the plan, I know, and find, too late, that

JUPITER. (39)

dreams are sometimes mockers." The dream sped on its errand gladly, and whispered its untrue message — that Troy should fall on the morrow and the Greeks be laden with booty.

Agamemnon awoke with a start, his face beaming with pleasure. Hastily he donned his tunic, shod his feet with sandals, buckled his sword at his thigh, threw over his shoulders a cloak, and, staff in hand, set out to arouse his chief.

It was early morning as they assembled and he, greatly elated, made known his strange dream, little thinking how he had been deceived. It was only his high position that caused the heroes to listen to what he said. "Battles have been fought in vain," they said; "and is Troy to be taken in a day because a dream has foretold it?"

But Agamemnon was so sure of victory when the battle should once begin that he even indulged in a joke, "just to try the men of his troops." He ordered all who wished to go home, to hurry to the ships on the plea that Troy could not be taken. He thought he would find them unwilling to abandon the prospect of plunder; while as soon as swift victory followed he would be exalted in the eyes of those who served him.

His joke soon came to be a serious matter, for the vessels were fast being crowded in spite of

attempts of restraint by stern logic and soft persuasion. Agamemnon, Ulysses, Nestor, and a score of other chieftains then threatened with death any one, who should dare to start a ship toward Greece.

Those upon the ships were forced to disembark, and the mighty host gathered upon the beach, muttering and protesting. To keep the crowd calm, Minerva came from heaven and spread the glad report, "This day brings final victory to the Greeks." At last silence was commanded, that the king might speak words of importance. All settled down and held their peace, all save one called Thersites.

Now Thersites was the ugliest man who came to Troy. His head was bald and pointed like a sugar loaf. He was hunch-backed, round-shouldered, and a cripple. He had always been noted for fault-finding. According to him the officers neglected their duty, the food was not fit to eat, the war was badly managed, and the whole thing was doomed to fail.

This fellow jeered at Agamemnon; asked him of what he had to complain, since he had got more money from the war than anybody else; taunted him with ill-treating Achilles, "a man far better than himself"; and, turning to the Greek soldiers, denounced them as a lot of women not daring to

speak their thoughts. He ended his senseless talk by trying to induce his comrades once more to start for home, take him as their leader, and desert their officers, who "seek their own profit and care nothing for the common soldiers."

Ulysses was greatly angered and, raising his heavy staff, he smote Thersites across the back, and said: "Sit down, wretch, and keep silent. For if I hear such talk from you again I pledge my word that, naked and beaten, you shall be driven in disgrace from the camp." The coward flinched under the blow and squatted down upon the ground, wiping the tears from his eyes. As he sat there, a silly smile wrinkling his comical face, he cast glances this side and that at the warriors around him. But not a word escaped him, for he dared not open his lips.

Every one laughed heartily at his expense, while those who heretofore had pretended to think him smart said one to another: "Well, well! Ulysses has done great service to the Greeks in fighting battles and in giving sage advice, but surely his greatest victory is won in making this silly fellow cease his endless prattle. He will probably not soon be heard again offering counsel." And this proved true, for throughout the whole story there is not a word further from Thersites.

VII. THE DUEL BETWEEN PARIS AND MENELAUS.

While Agamemnon told his dream to the listening Greeks, Minerva moved swiftly among them with her brightly shining ægis, whence fluttered a hundred tassels, each worth a hundred oxen. She stirred their latent courage, till columns were hastily formed for an assault upon the foe.

Nor were the Trojans idle; they saw the Greeks massed for battle, and in turn they prepared to meet them. In their eagerness for a combat they rushed through the city's gates, and, forming in line, boisterously crossed the plain to resist the invaders.

When the opposing forces drew near, a halt was called to prepare for the deadly struggle. Suddenly a man stepped out from the Trojan ranks and slowly paced to and fro. It was Paris, the idol of Troy, the robber of a Grecian home. He was imposing to look upon, as even the Greeks admitted. As he took long strides, he loudly shouted this challenge: "Ye so-called heroic Greeks, long time have ye stayed here among us — long time threat-

ened and boasted. Now here is a chance for proof. Send forth your bravest hero, the champion of your warriors, and let him test his strength by matching it with mine."

The action was so sudden, the words so unexpected, that, for a moment, the Greeks were dazed; but it was for a moment only, for there sprang from the Grecian side Menelaus, the dishonored husband.

Ah, the over-confident Paris! He little thought that Menelaus should be the one to face him. He stopped in his tracks, turned ashen pale, and, as a man steps upon a snake in the mountain path and jumps back trembling with fright, so Paris on a run dashed within the Trojan lines and disappeared from view.

The Trojans looked on in amazement, while the Greeks laughed in derision at the sudden change in the warrior.

The noble Hector was ashamed of his brother's conduct, and, seeking him out, berated him soundly.

Paris saw that he must fight, or lose the confidence of the Trojans. So, mustering all his courage, he answered the sneer of his brother: "Iron-hearted Hector, thy words are bitter but true; yet never again shalt thou say them, for I will redeem my honor. Go thou near the Grecian army and proclaim in tones emphatic: 'This is Paris' chal-

lenge: Greeks and Trojans alike sit quickly down where ye are; lay aside your shields; stand spears in bunches together, and let Menelaus, the chosen, come out alone to fight me. Be these the terms of the struggle: should Paris slay your hero, then let him retain fair Helen and let her possessions be his

HECTOR CHIDING PARIS.

without dispute or cavil; let Troy no longer be harassed, but stand in peace for ages, and let the Greeks return to the land they long again to see. If Menelaus shall conquer Paris, then he shall have Helen and her treasures, while we Trojans will pay to you Greeks wealth unmeasured, to cancel our deeds of the past and to make good the cost to your

treasury. Let the verdict of the gods be final and war between us be ended. We two shall fight for both armies, thus saving the lives of thousands. And, that the conditions be met, let oaths be administered and sworn, and may curses blight the life of whoever first breaks the compact.'"

Hector, gladly hearing both challenge and conditions, walked forth at once to proclaim them. Both armies approved the plan, for but two were to take any risk, and peace was to follow the duel.

When the agreements were settled, men measured and encircled a space, and each of the combatants was assigned his position. They stood there angrily frowning, firmly grasping their weapons. Both raised their spears and hurled them. Paris was the quicker and his spear sung through the air, and, hitting the shield of Menelaus, made the metal ring, but failed to touch the man. Menelaus' spear flew with terrible speed. Straight through the shield it went, and Paris barely saved his life by nimbly jumping aside, while the weapon sped on its way. The hero followed up the savage throw by striking his enemy's helmet a ferocious blow with his sword. But the sword was shattered and fell to the ground in pieces. Then Menelaus, furious with rage, sprang at Paris, seized the crest of horsehair waving from his helmet, threw him violently to the

ground, and, swinging him around, started to drag the prostrate man toward the Greeks. Presently the strap which held the helmet under the chin broke in two. Tossing the helmet to his friend, he darted upon Paris, when lo! Paris had disappeared; for when Venus saw that a moment more would bring death to her favorite, she wrapped him in a cloud and bore him from the field to his perfumed chamber in the palace of his father, Priam.

All around were marks of the struggle: the spear lay where it had fallen after piercing the shield of Paris; the pieces of the sword were there; the helmet gleamed in the hands of the Greek; the ground showed where the body of Paris had been dragged.

When Paris could nowhere be found, Agamemnon claimed a victory for the Greeks and demanded that Helen should be surrendered with all her possessions, and that the Trojans should pay a recompense according to their oath.

In the confusion which followed the duel a foolish fellow, Pandarus, for a moment forgot that the Trojans were not to break their vow. So, stringing taut his bow and selecting a faultless arrow, he sent it with tremendous force straight at Menelaus. It hit the shield and passed through it. Through armor and belt and tunic, into the flesh itself, the pointed arrow went, and there it stood quivering

with the force of the jar it received. Dark blood flowed from the wound to stain armor and costly garments. Menelaus stood shocked and fainting, for the weapon stung like a serpent.

Consternation reigned. Agamemnon, horror-stricken, ran to the side of his brother. Other Greeks followed his lead, and throughout the ranks of the army all waited in awe-struck silence for swift death to claim its victim.

Hoarse whispers of vengeance upon the Trojans spread: "That was the deed of a coward. What accursed beings they are thus to trifle with truces! But the gods will make them pay dearly for murdering one of our number."

Strong arms bore the suffering man gently from the field so that a physician could decide whether the wound must be fatal, or the hero's life might be spared to his people.

VIII. DIOMEDES WOUNDS VENUS AND MARS.

The shot at Menelaus sets the Greeks on fire. They rush against the Trojans. Nor do they fight alone; the gods take sides. Minerva helps the Greeks; Mars fights for the Trojans. Terror and Fear are there, and Strife, sister of Mars. Chariots mingle, spears fly, shield strikes shield, and swords flash, while the ground is strewn with struggling men, and the dead cover the plain. The Greeks are confident; the Trojans, desperate.

Led by Minerva, the Greeks seem victorious in spite of Mars, when Apollo darts among the Trojans to rally their wavering lines. But Minerva is not to be outdone; seeking Diomedes, she sets him ablaze with fury. He is transformed and glorified. Men flee before him as if he were a god. None are able to withstand his might, nor all combined to kill him. He dashes right and left, and, as he moves, death beckons every Trojan within his reach.

When the battle waxes hottest the gods retire for a time that mortals may contend unaided.

Pandarus sees Diomedes slaughtering warriors by the score, and thinks that now his chance to win

MINERVA. (50)

fresh laurels has come. So, letting fly an arrow, he sinks the shaft deep into the hero's shoulder, causing blood to gush forth in a stream.

The Trojan thinks he has killed the Greek, and, elated, shouts, "Ah! see this pride of Minerva fall and die like a common coward." But Diomedes is heroic. Grasping the arrow firmly, he wrenches it from the flesh and calls upon Minerva. And, lo, a miracle is wrought! the flow of blood is stayed; the pain ceases; his strength is renewed, more than renewed, for now he feels a vigor such as he never had before.

It is but a moment until his stalwart form is again conspicuous in the fight. Wherever he goes his victims fall.

At last Æneas, Venus' famous son, drives his chariot swiftly toward the Greeks and resolves, with the help of Pandarus, to slay this butcher. Alas, how mistaken he is! Once more Pandarus uses his trusty bow, but it is his final shot; a moment later he tumbles headlong, dead by a lance from the hand of Diomedes.

Æneas, although terror-stricken, jumps to the ground and stands over his comrade's form to defend it or to die. Instantly Diomedes picks up a stone heavier than the men of the present day could lift, and hurls it straight at the Trojan. It

strikes Æneas on the hip, crushing flesh and bone. No mortal now can save him from death. But Venus darts to his side, and, spreading her garments in front of him, wards off the Grecian weapons.

Raising in her arms her cherished son, she is hastily bearing him to a place of safety when a winged arrow grazes her wrist and makes a stinging wound.

With a cry of pain the goddess drops her helpless son upon the plain, and, more swiftly than the wind, goes to Mars as he sits upon a cloud with his harnessed horses near. She mounts his chariot and drives the famous steeds through the vaulted sky till she comes to Jupiter's Olympian home.

There she meets first her mother, Dione, and pours out her heart to her: "Mother dear, just see the fearful gash upon my wrist. See how the ichor flows. That hateful Diomedes hit me with a dart. Why, never in my life have I seen a fellow so base as he! I was simply carrying my beloved Æneas wounded from the field, and he dared to shoot me thus. His temper is terrific. He respects no one — nor god, nor man. Were Jupiter himself to appear, the reckless man would dare to fight. But heal at once this dreadful wound, lest I die from loss of blood."

VENUS.

To comfort her the mother tells how others of the gods have suffered at the hands of man: how Mars was bound and shut within a brazen jar for thirteen months and would have smothered had not the gods released him; how Juno was wounded in the breast with an arrow of triple barbs; how Hades suffered dire woes. Then she cures the trifling bruise.

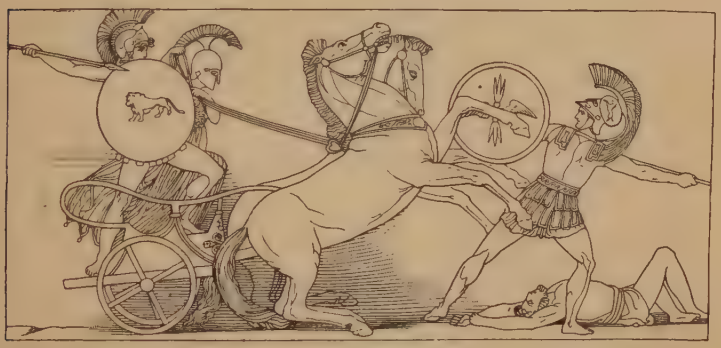
Meanwhile, upon the plains of Troy the battle rages with tempestuous fury. Apollo sees Æneas fall from his mother's arms and straightway stands beside him. Three times the frantic Diomedes rushes forward to kill the injured Trojan. Three times the god, with stroke of hand, drives back the warrior's shield. When a fourth time the Greek advances, Apollo's thundering tones warn him to beware. Then he knows it is a god who drives him from his prey.

Swifter than lightning's flash the real Æneas is borne to Apollo's shrine, while in his place there stands an image, a perfect model of the Trojan in form, in stature, and in armor. About this likeness fight many Greeks and Trojans — the Trojans to save, the Greeks to destroy, the thing supposed to be the hero.

And now Hector is seen working vengeance. With him, first behind, then before, strides Mars,

god of battle. This god's return angers Juno and Minerva, and they enter anew the field of strife.

Each moment the struggle grows fiercer. Minerva rushes to the side of Diomedes and whispers in his ear: "Shoot the fickle Mars. He said he would not help the Trojans. Fear him not: no harm shall



DIOMEDES WOUNDS MARS.

come to thee; I'll guide thy weapon to a spot uncomfortable for the trifler." With these words, snatching reins and whip, she urges the panting steeds straight toward Mars and the Trojan Hector.

Mars sees the two approaching and throws his spear with gigantic force full at the stalwart hero, but the spear glances downward and passes beneath the chariot axle. He fails to see Minerva's hand as it reaches far out and turns the lance. "Now hurl at once and with sure aim," Minerva calls.

In an instant the spear pierces the shield of

Mars, passes straight on through armor, belt, and tunic, and buries itself in his quivering flesh.

Diomedes trembles with excitement. Minerva's eyes sparkle with pride and joy, but Mars, racked with pain, shouts louder than ten thousand men. Greeks and Trojans are struck dumb with fear at the noise of the angry god. Humbled and indignant, Mars seeks the abodes of the gods to be healed of his fearful wound.

IX. THE MEETING OF DIOMEDES AND GLAUCUS.

Among the allies of the Trojans there was a Lycian prince whose name was Glaucus. He was a man of great valor. As Diomedes had wrought wonders fighting for the Greeks, so Glaucus had done splendid service for the Trojans.

The two drew near each other in the space between the armies. Both wanted to win fresh victories in the conflict. By a common impulse they poised their spears to let them fly. However, something about Glaucus was so striking that Diomedes stopped and called aloud: "Who of mortal men art thou, good sir? Never before have I seen thee in the man-ennobling battle. Surely thou art braver than thy comrades, else wouldst thou not await my lance. Children of ill-fated parents are they who face my thrust.

"Can it be that thou art some god come down to tempt impetuous man? If such thou art, then tell the fact, for never will I fight with heavenly beings. But if thou art of the mortals who live

upon the earth, then make known thy parents and thy home.

"Speak to the point, for time is precious here, and, were thy appearance less attractive, before a word could be spoken thou hadst fallen at my blow. If then of mortal birth, say so at once, that with all speed thou mayst meet thy doom."

Now Glaucus knew who spoke to him and trembled at the thought; but, banishing fear, he calmly answered: "Diomedes, lion-hearted, why dost thou ask from whom I sprang or whence I came? As is the race of leaves, so is that of man. The winds scatter the leaves in the autumn thick and far; but blossoming spring sends forth as many more. So with men; thousands may fall, but other thousands soon replace them. Yet to gratify thy wish, briefly shalt thou hear my family history. I am the son of Bellerophon, the mighty, he who slew Chimæra, which from its nostrils breathed forth flames of fire. It was Bellerophon that subdued the Solymi, the fiercest braves that ever strung a bow. He conquered the terrible Amazons, too, women abhorring men of every clime. So pleased were the Lycians at his prowess that, though a stranger, they gave him half of all the realm, and looked upon him as a

god. But why stand so long; why lower thy spear? What means thy changed expression?"

Now, as soon as the Lycian spoke Bellerophon's name, Diomedes stood his spear upon the ground and leaned upon it, and bending forward, listened to every word and closely scanned the speaker's face. Scarcely had Glaucus ceased, when Diomedes rushed ahead and grasped him by the hand. "Why, noble knight, thou art an old guest-friend of mine. Our families are bound in friendliest ties. It was at my father's house that Bellerophon was entertained twenty days, and every day an ox was slain and eaten at a sumptuous feast. They exchanged rare gifts in token of esteem, and pledged a friendship binding on themselves and theirs forever. It was natural for me not to recall thee, for thou wert then a youth, not yet had grown to be a warrior.

"My grandfather gave to thy father a belt inlaid with gold and gems, which, no doubt, graces thy house to-day, as I remember well a golden cup, a treasure left me as a reminder of the delightful visit of thy father.

"In memory of our fathers' words, let us shun each other's spears. There are Trojans enough to furnish me many a victim, and surely thou canst find Greeks for all thy strength. Now one thing

more; like our fathers before us, let us give proof of our friendship by exchange of such things as we have here."

These words of Diomedes won the day, and Glaucus gave to him his armor, all of gold, receiving in exchange one of bronze: the value of one hundred oxen for the worth of only nine.

X. THE PARTING BETWEEN HECTOR AND HIS FAMILY.

Hector saw that Diomedes must be checked, or the Trojans were doomed to defeat.

The thought came to him that for the sake of handsome gifts Minerva might forget her hatred of Troy and cease to favor the Greeks; so, while the battle was still raging, he hastened from the field with the twofold errand of winning Minerva's favor and forcing Paris to join in the fight.

When he reached the Scæan gate, he was surrounded by Trojan women, — mothers, wives, and sisters, — asking about their dear ones, and how the battle fared.

"The fates are against the Trojans. Bear to Minerva's shrine the costliest robe that Helen brought from Greece, and, placing it upon the knees of the goddess, beseech her to forsake the Greeks and help the men of Troy."

At the city's wall his aged mother met him and besought him to rest a moment and refresh his strength with a little wine. Gently he refused the cup, declined to sit, and merely explained his task. Then he hastened on to find Paris.

The laggard was polishing his weapons in his own palace hall, caring little for those now dying or still to die for the blame which was his own. Clad in full armor, and bearing in his hand a spear eleven cubits long, Hector, frowning, stood before him. With cutting command he bade the deserter to prepare at once for battle. "Too long already hast thou disgraced thyself and me by shirking."

With these words the hero left his brother's palace to see once more the wife and baby son so dearly loved.

He was disappointed in finding neither wife nor child at home, for Andromache, with nurse and boy, was standing on the tower watching the awful conflict. As she eagerly scanned the battlefield word came, "Hector seeks thee within the city."

In an instant the babe is handed to the maid, and the three are threading their way through the crowd. As the mother runs ahead, chiding the burdened nurse for following so slowly, she catches sight of Hector, peering this way and that as he hastily seeks the tower. With a cry of joy she throws herself into her husband's arms.

The nurse, meanwhile, stands behind, clasping the boy to her panting breast. The wife looks into the manly face of her lord, while tears rain down her

HECTOR PARTING FROM ANDROMACHE.

cheeks. She tenderly caresses him and pleads with him not to return to battle.

"Thy courage will cause thy death, dear one. Oh, what will life be worth to me when thou art gone? Think, too, of our little one. Wouldst thou leave him alone in the world? For what can his mother do when a slave to some cruel Greek? I would gladly die ere then. I can not see the son of Hector grow up a common servant. Place not thy country's good above the needs of wife and child. Mine is a loss exceeding all. Others turn to father, brother, kinsman. Alas for me, I have none such! Father and seven valiant brothers fell at Achilles' hand. Nor do I have a mother's love. She, too, has joined the throng below. Robbed, then, of all I love save thee, thou surely canst not run the risk of death and leave me to my fate. Brave love, thou art indeed my husband; but, more than that, thou art my father, mother, brother, many kinsmen all in one. Think of this, and thinking spare thyself for wife and child."

The pleadings of the loving wife and the sight of the helpless babe touched the warrior's heart. But within a voice was speaking which nothing else could still; it was his country's call to duty. Though his breast heaved with sighs, he answered: "These words of thine, dear one, are true. Alas, too true!

But words more potent still force themselves upon me.

"From childhood's earliest days no other call has equaled my country's cry for help. Always have I led the foremost. I know that Troy must fall, but may I stand for home till home shall be no more! No other loss will pain me as will the loss of thee, yet wouldst thou have me prove a coward? A coward is no husband. Better a hero among the dead than, living, a skulker from battle.

"Sad is the thought that the day may come when thou shalt bear an urn upon thy head, carrying water from the living spring at command of a savage master. Sadder yet that some morning's sun may find thee at the mill grinding corn.

"I would not live to see the time when one can say, 'There goes the wife of Hector, now a serving woman.'

"Fear not for me, dear one. No man can die before his time has come, nor escape that evil day, though he built himself within a wall. The gods assign to us our duties and our fates.

"Then let thy heart be cheered. Perchance another, brighter day may yet shine down upon us. At any rate I must be true to thee and to myself. When duty calls I must respond."

The father turned and reached for his boy, who

had intently watched the flashing metal of his armor. But the horsehair plume, bending forward, frightened the little one, and, with a cry, he nestled closer to the nurse's bosom.

Both parents laughed, though the mother's eyes were filled with tears. Hector removed his helmet, and, when he stretched out his arms again, the child gleefully went to him.

The father kissed the boy. Holding him high in air, he prayed: "Father Jupiter and ye other gods, grant that this, my child, may be noted among his fellows. May he be loyal and brave! May he be a defender of the Trojans! Grant that the time may come when men shall say, 'He is even mightier than his father!' May he return from battle with spoils to make his mother's heart rejoice!"

The prayer ended, the mother took the laughing child.

With fond embrace of those most dear, the father picked from the ground the helmet; then, placing it on his head, started for the battlefield.

The wife turned sadly homeward, oft looking back and sobbing, for she seemed to know that she had looked her last upon the noble Hector.

XI. HECTOR AND AJAX FIGHT.

Hector's return to the combat revived the Trojans' courage. At his side went Paris, anxious to redeem his credit. The two fought with many Greeks, who fell before their deadly thrusts as leaves before an autumn gale.

The Greeks, in turn, were now alarmed; for their enemies seemed desperate and made havoc everywhere.

Apollo, seated upon Mount Pergamos, saw Minerva swiftly passing to help the Greeks. Hastening to her side, he insisted that no god should interfere. "But, that thy heart may not be pained, agree with me to see a fight where neither side shall win. Let us match a splendid pair and watch them war in earnest. We alone shall understand how the duel is to end. Let Hector and the fiercest Greek be pitted against each other. Recall how we were entertained when Paris and Menelaus fought and no great harm was done. To please ourselves let us bring about a battle royal."

The goddess gladly yielded, for it meant to her no further loss of Greeks at least.

APOLLO. (68)

Now Helenus, Hector's brother, heard enough of what they said to know that Hector's life was safe. He therefore urged him to challenge any Greek to meet him in open field, "For the gods declare thy time is not yet come."

At once Hector's voice was heard, "Send forth your man, ye Greeks, ye braves, and let us see whose army has the stronger. If I shall fall, despoil me of my armor, but give my body to my friends to meet a proper burial. But if a Greek shall die, his armor shall be mine by right, while his body shall be honored as befits a warrior dead."

The Greeks were astounded. "Why does Hector make a challenge? Must some Greek come to death that all Troy may exult? Who dare now face the foe? Achilles is not here or he might hope to win. Who seeks the pleasure and the honor?"

There was a moment's pause. Each feared the test, but dreaded worse the charge of cowardice.

Menelaus first stepped out, but Nestor's hand quickly drew him back. In hot haste, the aged counselor called, "Fool, this is no second Paris. Save thy life for future acts, nor go to certain death. Thou canst not cope with one far stronger than thyself." Then, turning to the Greeks, he sneered at their reluctance, rebuked them for their

fear, and declared that were he young and strong again he would set them an example.

The Greeks heard the taunt and felt it keenly. At once nine stalwart warriors stood ready for the trial. Each pushed his claim with vigor: Menelaus as the Greek most injured; Agamemnon as the king in power. Diomedes, too, and Glaucus pleaded to go; Ajax also was among them.

When no decision could be reached, each marked his lot and placed it in a helmet. When the helmet was shaken, Ajax was found to be the man. He equipped himself in haste. The shield which he bore was made of seven ox-hides placed one upon another. It was round and very large, and its strength was wonderful.

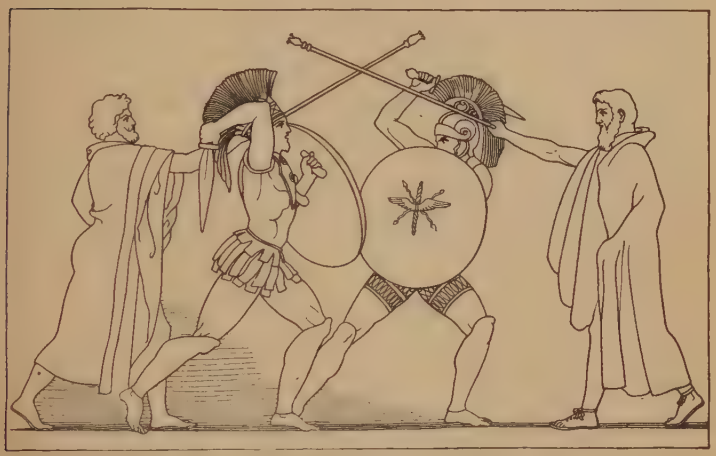
With scarce a word upon either side Hector and the Greek stood in the space assigned them. Twilight was stealing over the plain, and no time was to be wasted.

First Hector sent his spear with mighty power against the shield of Ajax. Through six hides it cut its way, but failed to pierce the last, for all its force was spent.

Then Ajax smote brave Hector's shield The spear passed through, not shield alone, but buckles and belt as well. It would have killed the man had he not jumped aside.

The two then ran together. They tugged and pulled till spears were free, when, jumping back some paces, they both let fly their weapons.

Again was Ajax' shield too much for Hector's strength, for the spear-point bent upon the metal



BATTLE BETWEEN AJAX AND HECTOR.

rim, while blood gushed forth from Hector's neck, where he was sorely wounded.

Nothing daunted, the plucky Trojan hurled a massive stone, which crashed against the shield of Ajax with fearful force. Scarce a moment later a stone of greater weight, from Ajax' hand, brought shield and Hector to the ground.

Hector struggled to his feet and the two rushed

upon each other to fight to the death in close quarters.

Friends on either side now interfered. The zeal, the strength, the bravery of both had won their hearts. Darkness, too, had settled down, and so they parted the stern heroes. It was agreed that neither side had won, but both had proved their daring.

The warriors returned to their armies, little dreaming they had but fulfilled Minerva and Apollo's purpose, and that these two, unseen of men, had nodded and smiled with delight.

XII. HECTOR'S MIGHTY DEEDS OF VALOR.

Thus far Jupiter had allowed the Greeks as well as Trojans to succeed. Now, he decided to fulfill the promise made to Thetis — to send the Greeks humbly begging to Achilles. So at gray of dawn he summoned all immortals to meet him on Olympus.

The gods well knew no common thought was back of his command. In haste they gathered and heard these words: —

"Let none dare lend a hand to either side until I give the word, else shall he sink to Tartarus, the deepest gulf below the earth. Forget this not, or ages long and full of woe shall oft bring back my solemn threat.

"Know ye how far your chief is great. From heaven to earth drop down a rope and at its lower end let all ye gods with clinging hands together strain your utmost, yet could ye not disturb me on my throne. But I in might supreme, with ease, could hoist you up, and earth and sea withal, to lofty Mount Olympus, and there about the peak could make the rope secure, and leave you chilled with frost and snow."

None doubted what he said. Muttering, they scattered to the neighboring heights that they might better watch the struggle soon to come.

Jupiter, meanwhile, harnessed to the chariot his bronze-shod horses, fleet of foot, with manes of flowing gold, clad himself in gilded robes, and, with glittering whip in hand, darted with lightning speed from heaven to earth until he reached Mount Ida. Then he loosed his horses from the chariot to let them graze, though veiled in mist so no mortal eye could see them. Then he took his seat upon a mountain top to see the fight on the plains below. With crash of chariot, clang of bronze, and whizzing of swift arrows, the armies attacked each other just as the gray of the morning sky was turned to red.

The conflict proved so entertaining that the god urged it on from morn till noon, yet neither side had gained. Warriors' hands grew weary grasping the spear, horses sweat and puffed, tugging the chariots; but the god had no mercy until his heart was satisfied.

When that time had come he thundered loud from Ida and sent a vivid flash to blind the Greeks with light.

Then they knew the god was angry and his anger was for them. Fear took the place of courage. Great heroes were confused. Even Ajax stood

aghast. Thousands turned to flee. The Trojans were elated and chased them far and fast. Noble Nestor tried escape until his horses failed him. Then he and Diomedes swore to kill Hector, in spite of all the gods. But such was not to be. Twice Hector's driver fell, but with a third he drove the twain, trembling with dread and fear. Loudly he shouted after them, daring them to fight.

Once more the brave Greeks rallied. The battle raged about Hector, who led a charmed life. The fiercest Greeks, each in turn, made him the object of their fury, but he always escaped the fatal blow. Agamemnon the king, Diomedes the hero, shrewd Ulysses, and wise Nestor, all strove to lay him low. Teucrus, who dared to aim an arrow at his heart, fell dead by a stone from the Trojan's hand. Whoever was most reckless in his thirst for Hector's life had death or wounds as his reward.

As night drew near the Greeks had lost all hope. They turned to flee to their waiting ships, the Trojans close upon their heels.

Hector dashed hither and thither, dealing death without restraint. He did not dream that he might fall, but, cheering on his men, he hastened toward the Grecian ships in hopes that he might set fire to them.

And had the god been willing, the day would not

have been ended till the blazing ships had crowned the Trojan victory.

But Jupiter was satisfied; at his command dense darkness settled down, too dense for one to tell his friend or foe.

The Greeks, in moody silence, crept back to their camp, crestfallen, in despair.

The Trojans with song and feast and dance made night rejoice, and hailed their lordly Hector as chiefest of them all.

XIII. AGAMEMNON SENDS FOR ACHILLES.

That night was the saddest the Greeks had ever known. Men wept as if their hearts would break for friends whom they could not find. They dared not search among the dead, for countless Trojan fires blazed upon the plain.

Long time the leaders sat in silent meditation. They had met the foe in open fight and had been sorely beaten. None could deny the fact. None cared to offer a reason, though all felt sure that only Achilles could prove a match for Hector. They longed to ask for him. Yet none was bold enough to put his thoughts in words, while the king found fault with Jupiter, with ill fortune, with lack of fighting men.

Diomedes moved uneasily as the king made his complaints, and other heroes cast meaning glances. His speech ended, the king sat.

All eyes were turned to Nestor as he spoke out their minds: "My lord, the king, the fault is all thine own. No other shares with thee the blame for our sad plight. Thou didst follow headstrong counsel. Thou hadst no right to rob Achilles of

his maid. I told thee then and now repeat, 'Such conduct ill becomes a man though king.' Jupiter is angry, and angry at thee. This day's doing came at his command.

"Give up thy foolish notions. Give back the girl to her owner. With haste dispatch our shrewdest men and let them beg, in thy great name, to have Achilles' help. If once again Achilles shall take his wonted place, to-morrow's sun shall show a man too great for even Hector. Pardon an old man's words, though far too blunt, for truth alone should now be spoken."

A murmur of approval ran through the crowd, while every warrior sat with bated breath to learn the king's decision.

He held his scepter by the middle and beckoned all to listen.

"Old Nestor, ripe in wisdom, thy words commend themselves. Poor king is he whom anger guides, as my experience proves."

He then selected Ulysses to bear the message to the angry prince, and sent along as companions Ajax and Phœnix. The last had nursed Achilles as a child and taught him to be clever.

"Seek, then, ye three, the man who sulks within his tent and try with your united wit to win him back to us. Be swift to go; nor tarry longer than

the errand calls. To-morrow must Achilles fight upon our side or we shall surely lose our ships.

"Tell him this from me: 'The king will give thee back the maid Bryseis, with many rare and costly treasures, — beautiful tripods, swift horses, skilled maidservants, and, on thy return to Greece,

THE EMBASSY TO ACHILLES.

his daughter for a wife with untold gold for a marriage portion and the rule of many cities. If Troy be taken, thy ship shall sink to the water's edge with spoils of thy selection, the envy of men of every age and clime. Put aside thy wrath. Fight once more with us. We need the aid which only thou canst give.'"

The three men went as bidden. They found Achilles seated in his tent, playing upon his lyre

and singing of glorious heroes. His friend Patroclus was at his side.

As Ulysses' shadow darkened the doorway, Achilles, with a start, laid aside his instrument and heartily greeted his friends.

Ulysses then made clear the object of their visit. He used his cunning to its utmost, trying to persuade the hero. Agamemnon's need was pressed; the value of the riches was made plain; in words well weighed, he told how proud the Greeks would be to see their favorite leader in the fight.

Achilles listened patiently to what he had to say.

Phœnix pleaded that for his sake and for the sake of friends they both held dear, the warrior would forget the past and win new laurels in the field.

Ajax added all that he could think. But even as they spoke, Achilles' knitted brow and flashing eyes told plainly that he would not accept a gift nor move a step.

"Is this, then, all there is to say? Have ye forgotten nothing? Your proffer lacks a vital part. Where spoke ye of your lord's repentance. His words still ring with sound of king. Now he seeks to bribe where once he only threatened. What is his wealth to me? Though he give me all he own, save in distant Greece, he but returns

what he received from me, for it was I who won these things of which he now so proudly speaks. Though his gifts were more than the sands of the sea, I would not lift my hand to help. As for marriage with his daughter, I want no family ties with him. I hate him worse than the gates of death."

Sadly they who came, went back to tell their failure.

The news was received in silence, for dread of to-morrow's battle made sorrowful their hearts.

Without Achilles' help they saw no chance to win. As the hours of the night drew on apace the tired Greeks sought their tents and tossed in troubled dreams.

XIV. HOW DIOMEDES AND ULYSSES STOLE THE HORSES OF RHESUS.

AGAMEMNON tried in vain to sleep. The nearness of the Trojan fires and the memory of the day's disasters caused him anxious doubt.

Therefore he sought Nestor. The two, awakening several chieftains, expressed their fear that, with the dawn, the Trojans might burn the ships at anchor. Some man must risk his life to find out whether they intended to do this.

Diomedes and Ulysses were chosen for this mission. With stealthy steps they crawled across the field of battle. While still within the Grecian camp, Ulysses saw a man approaching; whether friend or foe, the darkness was too dense to tell.

It was Dolon whom he saw. The Trojans, it seemed, had sent some one to spy upon the Greeks. Dolon was their fleetest runner, and thought no Greek could catch him, even if found out.

Ulysses and Diomedes dropped to the ground and waited. The Trojan did not see them, but slowly passed, peering everywhere as he picked his way among the bodies strewn around. Convinced

that he was a spy, the two Greeks arose to follow. Their footsteps startled Dolon. He stopped, and turning, waited, thinking Hector had, perchance, sent friends for his recall. Then, assured that enemies were near, he fled as fast as his good legs could carry him. But Minerva gave to Ulysses and Diomedes speed which even Dolon could not outstrip.

The Trojan saw that flight was useless and on his bended knee begged for life. He swore to tell the truth, no matter what they asked, if only they would spare him.

From him they learned that watchmen guarded the Trojan camp, so that no Greek need hope to deceive them. But the Thracians, he said, were less careful, for, having just arrived, after a long and weary journey, they had lain down to rest, forgetting to protect themselves. "Rhesus is their king," said Dolon. "Such a span of horses as he drives was never seen by man. They are of spotless white, large and strong and swift. Famous, too, are they. For many months our host has waited their arrival; for through them, rumor has it, Troy shall be saved."

This was better news than the Greeks had dared expect. These horses must be taken; for an oracle had foretold that Troy should never fall if the steeds

of spotless white, owned by Rhesus, king of Thrace, once drank the Xanthus waters or grazed upon the Trojan plain.

The two crept forward noiselessly, seeking the Thracian band. At last they came upon them, stretched on the ground, and wrapt in slumber. Their king lay in their midst, while just beyond the splendid horses stood.

To reach these last, the guards must be killed and that without commotion. With a single thrust of his sword Diomedes took the life of one who turned and groaned and, dying, sent forth a stream of blood. Ulysses grasped the dead man by the feet and dragged him to one side. Twelve victims more were treated thus, until a path was cleared through which to drive the captured steeds.

At last they reached the place where the horses stood. As Diomedes dealt the guard a mortal blow, Ulysses, with deft hand, unhitched the straps from the chariot rim. The two then quickly mounted. They struck the fiery steeds, which dashed with furious gallop upon the homeward way.

The noise awoke the sleeping Thracians. Up from every side they leaped, stood a moment dazed, then gave chase to the retreating pair. Diomedes and Ulysses heard the tumult waxing loud behind them. They knew that they were followed. Rhe-

sus' horses were, however, too swift for their pursuers who were soon left far behind.

Within the Grecian lines the chieftains sat, solemn, weighed down with care. Nestor first caught the sound of swiftly running horses. All jumped to their feet, speechless with amazement. Through the

DIOMEDES AND ULYSSES RETURNING WITH THE SPOILS.

uncertain light they saw the frightened steeds of Rhesus dashing wildly toward them, bearing the returning warriors, covered with blood and dust.

The two nimbly alighted. They briefly told their story amid a hundred questions. Laughing, they led the steeds to a place of safety; while from every direction Greeks crowded around, caressing horses and riders.

XV. HECTOR ALMOST KILLED WHILE JUPITER SLEPT.

The capture of Rhesus' horses gave hope to Agamemnon. He seemed a different man; decision was stamped upon his face, his step was firm, his voice commanding. All felt that, come what might that day, their king would prove invincible. His deeds, in the battle that followed, were like his look. The slaughter which he caused was terrific.

Jupiter saw the havoc and feared for Hector's life. To save his favorite Trojan he sent a message to him; he warned him to restrain his rage until the Greek should be crippled and retired from the field. Now Hector's anger knew no bounds; his passion blazed. Yet for the sake of future help he curbed his temper, but everywhere he urged his men on constantly.

Then followed an awful scene. Greeks and Trojans fell like leaves. Shouts of victory, groans of the dying and harsh commands joined with clash of shield on shield. When weapons were lost or

broken, men grappled like wrestlers striving to dash each other to the earth.

A spear struck Agamemnon's belt. He wrenched the weapon from its place and cast it far away, then, thoughtless of his wound, he fell upon the thrower and killed him instantly.

Another spear passed through his arm when raised to strike a blow; but like a maddened bull he raged the more and multiplied his victims. At last, the pain becoming too great to bear, he mounted his waiting chariot and hastened to the ships.

Then came Hector's time. For this he had been waiting. He entered the fray at once, aware that Jupiter would aid him. Before he paused for breath he slew nine Grecian heroes and would have turned them all to flight had not Diomedes and Ulysses together set upon him. For a time disabled by a thrust from Ulysses' hand, the warrior, returning, found Ajax the center of the conflict. He rushed upon him and the surging crowd, too hot with rage to think of pain.

And now, behold, the gods took sides, forgetful of their lord. First Neptune, roaring like ten thousand men, darted to the plain. Juno saw him from her height and smiled contentedly. She knew that could this god be let alone the Trojans would suffer roundly; but feared lest Jupiter might

observe him and surmise his purpose. Swift as a breath of air she sought the god of Sleep. They two then wrapped their lord in slumber, pleading his need of rest.

Jupiter's loud snores soon echoed throughout the Olympian realms. The sound delighted Neptune, and laughter choked his words as he set the Greeks against their foes. Under his direction they again assaulted Hector.

Ajax snatched a bowlder and hurled it at the Trojan. It hit the warrior on his chest and made him spin around as the top a boy has twirled with string. The hero fell to the ground. He fainted, vomiting dark blood.

Trojan groans and wails were mixed with Grecian shouts of victory. Such a frightful din was raised around the injured man that the noise reached Olympus and startled Jupiter from his nap. He sat erect, rubbed his eyes, and gazed around in wonder to find the cause of this disturbance. Far off upon the Trojan plain he saw the swaying crowd, saw exultant Ajax, saw elated Greeks, saw the Trojans wringing their hands in sore distress. And then he jumped to his feet, his wrath aroused, for there upon the ground, stained with blood, gasping for breath, lay Hector, his warrior, dying unless help should come most speedily.

The god knew that he had been cheated. Sending Apollo with stern orders to restore the man at once, he summoned Juno to his side and spoke these stinging words: "Thou, shrewd at planning, hard to deal with! 'Tis by thy trick that Hector lies at point of death. I have a mind to beat thee. Hast thou so soon forgotten those former painful days; how thou wast hung on high, two anvils at thy feet, thy hands secure with bands of gold too strong for force to break? In future time deceive me and something worse than that shall teach thee to be careful."

Juno shuddered at the thought and tried to soothe her lord.

"You are detected," said some friend to Neptune as he fought. The god of the waters bounded in terror over the plain and plunged into the sea, grumbling because he could not work his will.

Apollo, with stroke of hand, revived Hector's failing strength. Together they attacked the Greeks. The god went in front, holding high his terrifying ægis. Greeks ran at sight of it. The two gave chase. They jumped across the ditch which the Greeks supposed could not be passed. Apollo threw down the ramparts built for the Greeks' defense and scattered them hither and thither, as

boys at play destroy with a blow the house they made and toss the sand in all directions.

About the ships the Greeks fought doubly hard, for these they must not lose. Ajax was their hero; Hector was the Trojan idol.

Then a fearful cry was raised, the like of which had not been heard. Hector, pushing, struggling, fighting step by step, had reached a ship, had grasped it by the stern, and, clinging there, loudly called for fire.

Jupiter had kept his word. The Trojan's hand was holding a Grecian boat and by him a blazing torch could now be flung upon the deck.

XVI. PATROCLUS, THE FRIEND OF ACHILLES.

Achilles and Patroclus had been boys together. They had lived in the same house, studied under the same masters, and shared in the same sports. Together they went to the Trojan war; the first to be a warrior, the second as his comrade.

When Achilles refused to fight, Patroclus, though thinking his conduct wrong, withdrew with him.

While Achilles from the deck of his ship sullenly watched the battle, his friend went back and forth telling many details. At last, when Hector's torch had lighted a Grecian ship, breathless, he came to his master.

"How canst thou longer wait?" he cried. "Smitten is Diomedes; wounded is Ulysses; our brave king, too, is hurt. Wilt nurse thy wrath until the fleet is burned before our eyes? Don thine armor once again and prove the might of Thetis' son. Or, if thou wilt not yield, grant me at least this boon: let me go forth to fight; on me thine armor fit. Its sight will gladden the Greeks, and the Trojans will retreat."

But Achilles' heart was turned to stone; he would not deign to fight. Nevertheless, he handed his armor to Patroclus and sent him to the field. He urged his friend to save the ships, but not to chase the Trojans as they sought their citadel. This last he made the sternest of all his commands.

Patroclus adjusted the armor, and then hastily entered the combat. Achilles sent with him the Myrmidons, then returned to his tent, solemnly poured a libation, and solemnly prayed to the gods.

Patroclus forgot his danger, forgot Achilles' warning, forgot everything save that the enemy were hurrying to their citadel, and that he might take Troy. He rushed up to the battlements and tried to scale the city's wall, nor saw Apollo seated there. Three times he struck at the god. Three times Apollo forced him off and smote the shining shield with his immortal hands. Yet Patroclus in his blindness struck the fourth time.

Then Apollo spoke. The man drew back in fear; but, turn which way he might, the Trojans hemmed him in. He saw that he must die; yet, for Achilles' sake, he bravely faced his foes. Hector's chariot dashed toward him. A heavy stone from the hand of Patroclus knocked the

driver over the chariot rim. In an instant Hector leaped to the ground, and for an hour's time Greeks and Trojans strove for the possession of the corpse. Darkness was coming on, but neither side withdrew, and Patroclus was rushing forward to deal more deadly blows, when Apollo, in hot anger, smote him on his helmet. While his eyes were blurred with dizziness, Hector gave him a mortal wound.

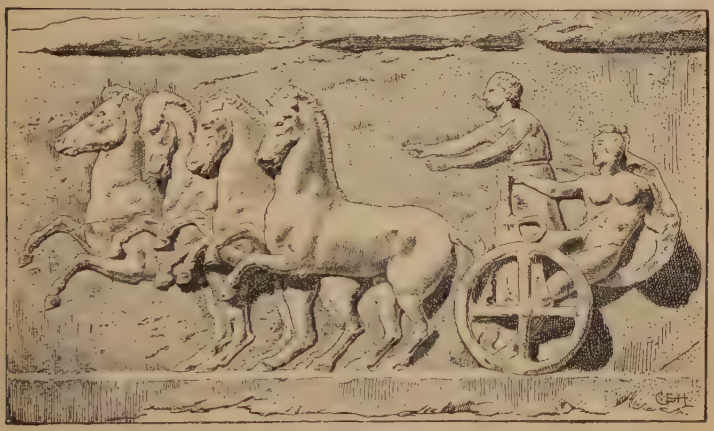
As the hero lay there dying, Hector boasted of his triumph. Brokenly Patroclus answered: "'Twas not thy might that proved too much for me; it was Apollo who did the deed. Think not thyself too great, for soon thou, too, shalt lie with death for thy companion, from whom thou canst not flee. Take comfort if thou canst, for thou shalt soon need comfort." With these words the spirit left him. Hector drew his spear from the body, threw the captured armor into his chariot, and retired from the field.

Achilles was pacing back and forth in his tent, burdened with loneliness. He was anxious, too, for his friend's safety. Startled by rapid footfalls, he turned to face a herald, who hoarsely called, "Patroclus is dead, thine armor is gone, and we Greeks are unable to recover the body."

That was a crushing blow. The hero threw

dust upon his head, fell to the ground, tore his hair like a madman, while his whole frame shook with sobs.

To Thetis' tender question, "What new calamity, my child?" he said: "If now thou lovest me as thou hast often said, haste thee to Vulcan's shop, and



War Chariot.

urge him to prepare an armor strong as ever worn by man, that, clad in it, I may avenge the murder of my friend."

The mother looked upon her son, so beautiful and strong; then she answered: "Be not in haste to slay the Trojan. An oracle of old has decreed that thy death will quickly follow his. As for the armor, I'll go at once to beg the best

of Vulcan's make. Till my return refuse to fight; then if thy anger driveth thee, no word of mine shall keep thee back although my heart should break."

Thetis was speeding her way to Olympus, when again reports were brought to Achilles that, in spite of all the Greeks could do, the body of Patroclus would surely be lost, unless some help should come. What to do Achilles did not know. His impulse was to rush into the fray, though not a piece of mail protected him, but his mother's warning held him back.

As he was debating, Iris, sent from Olympian heights, stood at his side and said: "Go thou, Achilles, as thou art; not to the battle, but down to the trench. Then raise a mighty shout. Doubt not some god will make thee heard above the clash of arms."

Instantly he started. Unknown to him Minerva threw her ægis round his shoulders, and on his head the goddess set a crown of golden cloud, from which blazed high a flame. When he had reached the trench, he stood and then sent forth a shout, the like of which no mortal man had ever made; it was Minerva's voice and his. Three times the shout went up; three times its tones rang high and clear. The sound had scarcely died away before the Tro-

IRIS. (97)

jans fled, and the Greeks bore toward their camp the rescued corpse, followed by Achilles.

When they reached his tent they laid the form upon the ground, and all went out in silence. Achilles and his friend, the living and the dead, were once again together.

XVII. THETIS' VISIT TO VULCAN'S WORKSHOP.

Thetis knew that Vulcan would grant her any favor, for years before she had rescued him from death.

It came about in this way. Juno hated Vulcan even as a child. While still a growing youth, one day when the gods were debating, he dared to make a suggestion that angered the goddess-queen.

In a fit of passion she seized him by the foot and hurled him from Olympus. All day he fell. When at last he struck the earth his life was nearly gone, and he was badly maimed. Thetis housed him in her grotto at the bottom of the sea, and there she gently reared him in spite of his being crippled, for a god with any weakness is an object of contempt.

Nine delightful years Vulcan lived under the ocean, hearing the murmuring of the water as it moved above his head. These were busy years for him, for he spent all the time in inventing things with which to please his friend, the nymph. His skillful hand wrought brooches to fasten her beauti-

VULCAN'S WORKSHOP.

ful robes, and wonderful golden bracelets, and necklaces, and cups.

When at length his wondrous skill was famed throughout the world, he was restored to his place among the Olympian gods. He was good-natured and forgiving, and soon forgot the treatment of his youth, and for each god and goddess he built a palace greater and more splendid than mortal mind can think. But, though sought and praised by all, yet none so easily gained his favor as Thetis of the sea.

He was still lame, but that disturbed him little; bronze maidens, endowed by him with life, helped him from place to place. The palace where he dwelt was built to last forever, "shining as the stars." But he loved work beyond all else, and was ever active, shaping something new and strange.

He was at his anvil when Thetis was announced. Hurriedly he collected his tools and placed them in a chest; wiped the sweat from his brow; washed clean his brawny arms, and came limping into her presence. He saw at once that she was distressed, and asked what service he could render to pay in part the debt he owed her.

She told him how the armor had been lost, and besought him with tears to make another in which her darling son might fitly meet his fate.

Her wish was scarcely spoken ere the god went

THETIS BRINGING ARMOR TO ACHILLES. (102)

limping to his task. He turned twenty bellows upon the fire and commanded them to blow. Into the seething flames he threw abundant bronze and silver and gold. He wasted no time in planning, but, fast as the metal was ready, laid it with tongs upon the anvil and hammered it to his taste.

First he wrought a shield more brilliant and strong and costly than ever was worn before by man or god. Its strength must repel all missiles. Its surface must have luster to dazzle even Thetis. On it were carved pastures and grazing herds, cities crowded with busy men, a marriage scene, assemblies in debate, besieging armies, cattle yoked to the plow, vineyards laden with grapes, groups of dancing youths. There, too, were rivers, mountains, the heavens with sun, moon, and stars. But, first of all, the shield was stout and firm and handy.

Next he wrought a corselet, shining like the sun; then a helmet of bronze, adorned with crest of gold. Moreover, he made greaves, glistening and shapely, and thus he ended his task.

Then he carried all to Thetis and laid them at her feet. Without a word, her eyes alone expressing thanks, the nymph lifted the treasures in her arms, sprang from Mount Olympus, and hastened to Achilles. Vulcan gazed after her, and thought, "How every mother loves her son."

XVIII. ACHILLES SLAYS HECTOR.

At break of day Thetis reached her son, bending over Patroclus. He had passed the night with the dead. The sight of his mother's gift cleared his face of frowns. At once he donned the armor and left his tent, resembling a god whom Jupiter had sent to earth to do some mighty deed.

As he strode toward the camp he raised a shout which thrilled all Grecian hearts, awakening men from sleep, and arousing even the ill and wounded to follow where he led. When he came to Agamemnon's tent he entered and told his wish to drop their past dispute. His sorrow was too deep to harbor rage longer. The death of his dear Patroclus relieved him from all vows. His hand and heart were ready now to aid the Grecian cause. The king then asked forgiveness for his ill temper, too, and restored the maid Bryseis with many costly gifts.

The joy of the Greeks surpassed all bounds as they saw the two made friends. In haste they made a feast, for the hearts of all were merry. They sang, they danced, they talked of what would now be possible. All partook of the banquet save the

heavy-hearted Achilles. While others ate, he turned to see once more the dead hero within his tent.

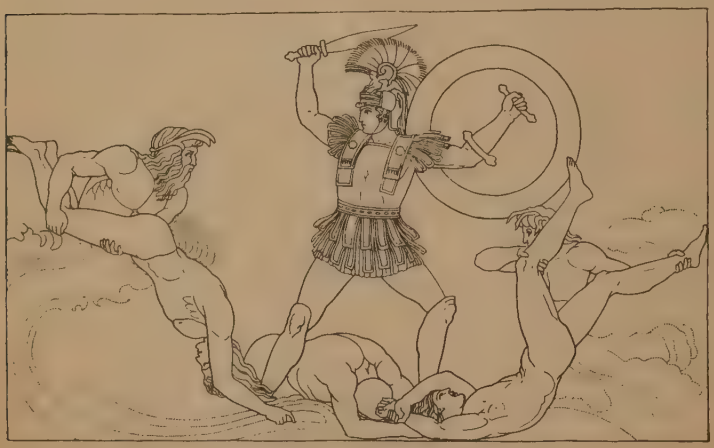
The feast was not prolonged. Time was not to be wasted. The warriors were anxious for battle. As they started for the combat, Achilles mounted his chariot. The steeds plunged wildly forward. No need of whip for them; they knew their master's wish before a word was spoken. As their hoofs rang out upon the plain, they loudly called to Achilles, "Like the wind we will bear thee, Achilles, on this last race of thine; but while glory surely awaits thee, death, too, is close at hand."

As Achilles sped onward in his chariot, suddenly Hector's helmet flashed near by, and he boldly hastened toward it.

A moment later Hector's spear was thrown with giant's strength against Achilles' shield; but, strange to say, it failed to make a dent, and, bounding back, fell at the thrower's feet. Hector was amazed. Achilles rained blow after blow upon his victim as he stooped to regain his weapon. Then a marvelous thing occurred; for where, a moment since, the Trojan stood, now a mist was settled. Apollo had borne the Trojan away, and thus had saved his life. The Grecian hero turned to other foes and killed them by the score.

Now followed such a battle as had not been

waged throughout the ten years' siege. So many fell upon the banks and rolled into the river that Xanthus could no longer force its waters through its channel. In vain the river grumbled because it could not flow. Achilles would not stay his hand,



ACHILLES FILLS THE XANTHUS.

till Xanthus turned its floods to drown the reckless hero. This it would have done had not Vulcan started a fire; then flame and flood contended till heat dried up the water.

Achilles drove the enemy steadily toward their city. At last its towering walls made safe the fleeing Trojans — all save Hector, who stayed outside to meet that foe whose shield had spurned his spear.

Friends stood upon the towers and loudly called for him to enter. Their entreaties were unheeded. At his command they closed the gates, and left him there to stand alone against his bitter foe.

Calmly he awaited Achilles running swiftly toward him; but, when the Greek drew near, the gleaming mail and blazing eyes were more than he could stand. The Trojan, shaking with terror, lowered his spear, and turned to flee, Achilles at his heels. Three times around the walls they went, Hector leading, Achilles ever gaining. Then Hector saw that flight was vain. He stopped and faced about, ready for battle and death.

The two were near enough to speak and hear. Both panted with passion and weariness. Both knew that Fate stood by with death in hand for one. The Greek was confident; the Trojan hopeful, for fear had now departed. A fight to the death they came for, and a fight to the death they must have.

The duel began in earnest. It was soon decided, a goddess aiding the stronger. Achilles hurled his javelin without a moment's warning. Hector jumped aside and thus escaped his death, but failed to see Minerva catch the lance and return it to its owner. Then Hector's weapon rang upon Achilles' shield, but did not pierce the metal. Achilles stood grasp-

ing his trusty weapon, while Hector's own lay far beyond.

The Trojan knew that some god now favored Achilles and he must fight unaided. He drew his sword and raised it high to strike, and thus exposed an opening in his armor. A moment later Achilles' spear had landed there, and Hector's life was ebbing fast away. Dying, he begged that his body might be given to his friends. And when denied this boon, in bitter anguish he spoke these final words: "Truly thy heart is iron in thy breast. Fear thou the wrath of the gods in the day when thou shalt die, slain by Paris and Apollo."

XIX. PRIAM RANSOMS HECTOR'S BODY.

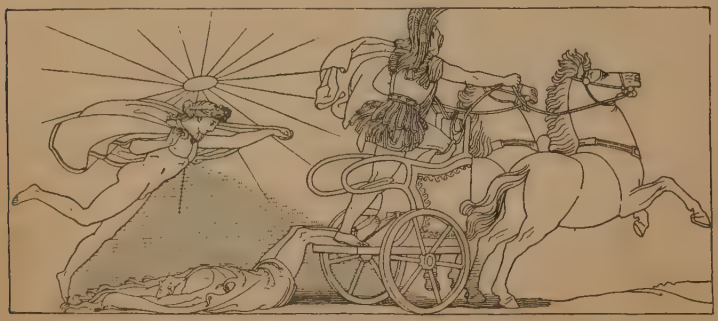
The anger of Achilles still waxed hot, though Hector lay before him, slain. He tied the dead man's feet to his chariot axle and drove his horses on the run three times around the wall. The body, rudely dragged, was cut and bruised by stones. Achilles then drove back to his own tent, unhitched the team, and left the Trojan prone upon his face, to be a prey for dogs and vultures.

From the towers of the city, the Trojans watched the heartless deed. Women fainted, strong men wrung their hands in anguish, King Priam could scarce restrain himself from rushing down to resent an act so brutal.

Achilles cared not for the Trojans' feelings, but, merely glancing at the prostrate form of Hector, made ready to bury Patroclus.

The gods, however, had more respect for the Trojan hero. Unseen of man, a change came over the dead body. The wounds all disappeared, the hair and beard lay smooth, the face was calm as in sleep. Twelve days and nights the body lay unharmed by dog or bird, nor did decay set in.

So long was Achilles busy about the funeral rites for Patroclus. Nine days men gathered timbers, chips, and brush, raising a pyre a hundred feet square upon the ground and high to correspond. Thereon they burned the body of Patroclus, and with it a score of Trojan youths and countless cattle, a worthy sacrifice. Achilles stood near by and as



HECTOR'S BODY DRAGGED AT THE CHARIOT OF ACHILLES.

the flames ascended, poured wine from a golden vessel, and prayed to the immortal gods. When the fire had done its work the ashes of Patroclus were entombed where Achilles was soon to lie.

While the Greeks were thus engaged, the Trojans were discussing a way to recover their dead.

One day, as the women sat in groups bewailing the fate of Troy, a messenger arrived. He had come from far Olympus. Jupiter had sent him. He came to bring good news, "Hector's body shall

yet be buried among his lifelong friends." Peering this side and that, he found at last the one he sought — Priam, the aged king. The old man sat aloof, shrouded in his cloak, wrapped in gloom, a picture of despair.

The messenger's approach was not more strange than the demand he made — Priam, unarmed, was to face the Grecian hero's wrath, and tell a father's love. "Thus shall the heart of Achilles be melted and Hector be recovered."

Priam threw his cloak aside, gave quick and sharp command for a wagon drawn by horses and filled with costly treasures. In vain his wife embraced him and begged him not to go. His purpose was immovable. Through the wide porticoes he guided the fiery pair, out over the plain, past companies of Greeks, straight on in the darkness of night, straight on to Achilles' tent. There he slackened rein.

Pushing the guards aside, he faced the terrible Greek, for the dignity of his errand made him fearless. Achilles admired the daring act and listened closely as the old man spoke. Tears stood in Priam's eyes and his voice shook with emotion as he told how Peleus, far away, was longing for Achilles, no dearer to a Grecian father than was Hector to a Trojan. "In the name of that father's love give back my boy to me. Accept these goodly

gifts, reminders of thy kindness, and, with them, the blessings of a man stricken with fourscore years."

Some marvel that Achilles was softened by what the old king said; but a god's voice within was calling, "A brave man should be generous." Not only was Hector's body carefully covered with mantles and lifted upon the wagon, but a nine days' truce was given to insure its proper burial.

Though night was well advanced, Priam started home elated at what was accomplished.

Throngs of excited Trojans rushed to meet the wagon as it drew near the city. They had not slept that night in their eagerness for news. It is true they deeply sorrowed at the sight of the beloved friend; but joy tempered their sadness, he was now among his own.

They built a stately funeral pyre and burned the honored body. They buried his ashes in a golden urn and marked the spot with earth and stones, a place still called, "The tomb of Hector, tamer of horses."

XX. THE WOODEN HORSE.

We know but little of what occurred between the time when Hector was slain and the day when the city fell. Homer tells us almost nothing. We should be glad to know just how Achilles met his death, but of this we are not positive. Many different stories are told; perhaps the one most common is that Apollo helped Paris send his arrow to a vital spot. Rumor has it that Achilles and Patroclus were buried in the same tomb, as Patroclus had requested. The war between the opposing armies went on, nor could the Greeks force their way inside the Trojan walls. At last Ulysses thought of a plan by which to take the city.

The Trojans were surprised to see hundreds of Greeks bringing boards, planks, and timber in endless quantity to a spot not far from their walls, but beyond reach of their weapons. They watched them many days, at work upon a structure which towered higher than the city wall. What it was they could not tell. Its shape was neither that of a temple nor of a dwelling. At last they perceived that the monster was a massive wooden horse.

They did not know that it was hollow and was to house a score of fighting men.

When all the work was done, Ulysses and some comrades hid themselves one night inside the horse. When morning came the rest of the Greeks raised their sails and turned the prows of their ships as if to start for home.

THE WOODEN HORSE.

Not many miles from Troy an island lies out in the sea. Behind this island the Grecian fleet cast anchor.

The Trojans watched the ships until the island hid them from view, and then poured through the city's gate into the plain where yesterday the Grecian camp had been. Men and women came. They walked around the horse and wondered what it meant. The Greeks secreted there heard many strange suggestions: some would pierce its sides to test its strength; others would set it afire to see its pitchy timbers blaze; while others still would draw it to some cliff and hurl it down.

While they were thus debating, a tumult arose

near by. A crowd of Trojans came, dragging, against his will as seemed to them, a Greek whose name was Sinon. They had caught him on the plain. With many calls for help and many solemn protests he told his artful story, planned to cheat the Trojans. He said the Greeks had left him and that he hated them and would expose their plans; that they had sailed for home just as the Trojans thought; that they had built the horse as an offering to the gods. Its bulk was thought to be so great that the Trojans could not stir it, for if once it came within the city, Troy should never fall.

That was a shrewd story, shrewdly told, and served its fullest purpose; for the heart of every Trojan was set upon bringing the horse inside the citadel. To make an opening large enough the wall, in part, was leveled to the ground. Great ropes were fastened to the body. Men, women, and maidens tugged and pulled to move the thing along. So it came about that, when darkness settled down, the horse, with all its freight, was inside Troy.

The Trojans, thinking the war was over, gave themselves to merriment and then fell fast asleep. They did not even set a watch.

At midnight the horse was opened. The Greeks stole out. A beacon flame made known the fact to those behind the island. Stealthily the Grecian

fleet returned to the beach. Innumerable warriors rushed through the opened walls to help Ulysses and his friends. They set the houses ablaze throughout the slumbering city until the plain was lighted with the glare. Priam's palace as well as the humblest hut went up in smoke that night, and, when the morning came, naught but ashes remained of proud old Troy.

PART II.

THE ADVENTURES OF ULYSSES.

MAP SHOWING
THE WANDERINGS OF
ULYSSES

I. THE START HOMEWARD.

The Trojan War, which had lasted ten years, was at an end. Of course the Greeks were anxious to return to their homes and the wives and children whom they had left so many years before. They therefore prepared to sail, taking many treasures, and Helen, for whom the great war had been waged.

They had fought together bravely, but now could not agree, either to prolong their stay for greater gain, or to sail without delay. Some of the leaders favored one plan, some another. Many therefore departed at once, and others remained awhile by the shores of Troy. In a few weeks, however, all had gone to seek their homes.

The most of them reached their native land with the usual varied fortunes of sea voyages. But this was not true of all.

You remember that Ulysses, the king of Ithaca, had been very loath to leave his home and the wife and child whom he so dearly loved. The ten years at Troy had been hard for him, for the faces of his patient wife and little one were always before him, awake or asleep, while their arms seemed ever to

beckon him homeward. He was therefore among the first to hoist sail and make ready to return to his native land.

With high hopes he took charge of his twenty ships, not dreaming that for him there still remained ten years of travel o'er land and sea, and that, of all those who embarked with him on the voyage, he alone would live to reach the loved island of Ithaca.

II. ULYSSES AND THE CYCLOPS.

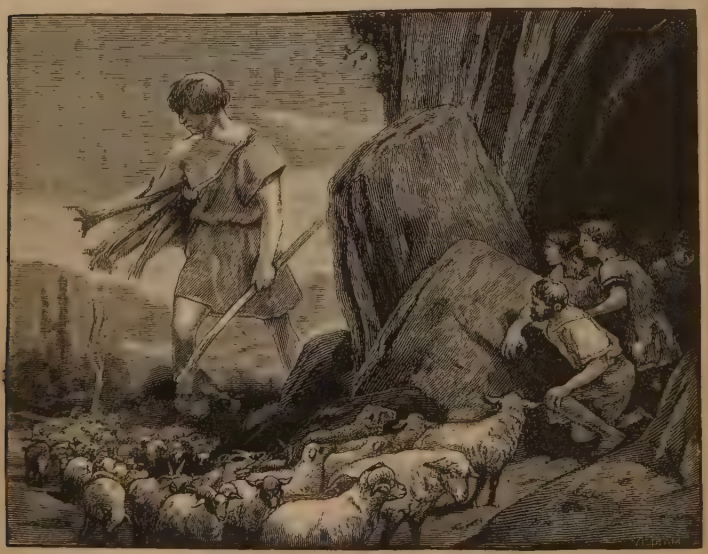
One afternoon, as the fleet was sailing over a smooth sea, Ulysses and his men discovered an island on which great flocks were scattered. Some distance farther, another rocky island arose high above the water. Upon its hills were grazing countless sheep and goats.

Ulysses was curious about the owners of such flocks. Taking a single ship with its crew, he crossed the dividing waters and anchored in a harbor. With twelve selected men he landed and entered a mammoth cave, whose opening faced the landing.

How strange the sight which met their eyes! Around the place were set, in rows, hundreds of jars of milk. Cheeses too heavy for a man to lift were piled high at one end. The walls were lofty and gloomy. Thousands of lambs and kids awoke echoes with their bleating.

The men would fain have eaten some cheese and drank their fill of milk, and then gone back to the ship, carrying what they could. They urged

Ulysses not to await the dwellers of the cave. They feared the welcome they might find. Ulysses was unyielding. He forced his men to stay. He thought by trade of wine to gain some worthy treasures.



CYCLOPS DRIVING HOME HIS SHEEP.

Now when the sun was low such a bleating reached their ears as one could not imagine. The lambs and kids confined within answered lustily, until the air was filled with the sound and the cavern fairly trembled. Then numberless sheep and goats swarmed in.

At last, when all had entered, the visitors arose to greet the band of men which they supposed would follow. But instead they saw a single giant, a monster, bending low to pass within the arch; his shoulders nearly filled the space where two of them had walked abreast.

Ulysses almost ceased to breathe at sight of Polyphemus, greatest of the Cyclopes, famed throughout the world. The giant, having entered, took up a bowlder lying near, too large for thirteen Greeks to lift, and closed the cave's great mouth. Then he milked the sheep and goats; fed the little ones and set aside the milk, some for cheese, some to drink. While busy at his chores he did not see the men; but when at last his single eye discovered them, he gave a roar like deep-toned thunder. The frightened Greeks retreated to a corner. In answer to the stern command, to tell their name and whence they came and what had brought them there, Ulysses spoke their woes and idle thoughts, and begged the angered one to let them go in safety, for Jupiter was quick to see and sure to pay for noble acts.

His story made slight impression. The Cyclops cared for no one. All gods were alike to him. Jupiter was but a name. Ulysses had barely ceased to speak, when the giant seized two of the hiding men,

dashed them against the walls of stone, and ate them, bones and all.

POLYPHEMUS.

Then he lay down and slept, while the Greeks sat huddled together and whispered plans of escape.

If only they could move the stone, their exit would be easy, but now they sat with sleepless eyes, waiting for the morrow.

When the morning came, the Cyclops milked his flocks, fed and penned the young, then killed two Greeks, and ate them with a relish. His breakfast ended, he let the flocks go out, but no Greek was keen enough to steal his way among them. Sure that all was well, the giant rolled the door of stone in place, and followed the sheep to pasture.

The Greeks thought death was certain, but Ulysses' busy brain was ever full of schemes. Within the cave the trunk of a tree was found. One end was quickly sharpened; and, in the fire kindled there, was charred and piled about with stones. All wondered what the purpose was, yet no one asked Ulysses.

At night the Cyclops locked himself and his flock within the cave, then built a fire of brush, and asked the name of those "choice Greeks so sweet to eat."

Ulysses answered, "Noman is my name."

"Very good," said the Cyclops, "Noman shall be eaten last of all." Again two Greeks made meat for his repast.

And now Ulysses tried his plan. He cautiously

drew near with proffer of some wine. This wine was not of common sort. It was so strong, in fact, that half a glass would put to sleep even a very strong man. The Cyclops did not know this, and so drank several bowls, with scarce a breath between them. Soon he stretched himself upon the ground, and snored in drunken stupor.

Now had come the time for action. Ulysses and his comrades brought the tree from its hiding place. They plunged its charred end into the flame, and reddened it like coals. Then all took hold; they drove it into the giant's eye, and turned it round as an auger. In vain he shrieked and threw his arms about. Though badly frightened, they did not stop until his sight was gone, his eye destroyed.

The shout that Polyphemus raised brought the neighboring Cyclopes in crowds to the door of his cave. But when, in answer to their questions, Polyphemus roared, "Noman hath crippled me," they thought that he was crazy, or if no man had injured him, some god must be to blame. They therefore left him and went their several ways.

When morning came, Ulysses tied the sheep together by threes. Beneath each middle one a Greek clung fast, and thus was carried safely out, although the eyeless Cyclops sat at the door and

felt, with touch of hand, the back and sides of all the sheep that passed.

The Greeks then hastened to the ship, and sailed for the opposite island. Ulysses taunted Polyphemus as he stood upon the shore. The angered giant snatched a mountain top and blindly hurled it after them. The mass of earth and stone plunged into the sea beyond their ship, and raised up such high waves that they were driven back almost to land. They plied their oars with all their strength, nor did Ulysses speak again till they were twice as far away. Then he shouted loudly, "Tell all who ask that Ulysses shut out the world from thee." For answer came a bowlder hurled far out to sea. Then they saw the giant take a pine tree for a staff and wade into the deep, feeling with one hand for the ship that he would gladly sink. At last he turned about and groped his way homeward.

Ulysses and his comrades were free and safe once more.

III. WITH ÆOLUS, THE RULER OF THE WINDS.

Some days after the Greeks had fled from Polyphemus, their ships drew near an island called Æolia, famous because it floated on the sea. High walls of gleaming bronze encircled it, while shut within were all the winds that sweep the earth. Æolus dwelt there. At his command East Wind would blow, or North, or South, or West, and, when he waved his wand, all would blow together, or none would blow as he might indicate.

Perhaps one could not find a place throughout the world in which was greater bliss than on that floating island. Esteeming their visit a favor, Æolus welcomed the Grecian heroes, and listened with lively interest to their many stories of strange adventure.

While two new moons were seen the Greeks were entertained. Ulysses then asked for winds that would favor his voyage. The king was generous-hearted, and when he saw that his guest was weary and had no pleasure in tarrying longer, he

TEMPLE OF ÆOLUS. (129)

killed a mammoth ox, nine years of age, and into its hide he gathered East Wind, North and South. The West Wind he left free to take its usual course. His own hands tied the ox-hide bag that not a breath of air might possibly escape. When fastened with silver cord, he hung it to the mast of Ulysses' ship, forbidding the Greeks to touch it unless they welcomed trouble.

The ships of Ulysses, with white-winged sails, were driven by the West Wind straight toward the desired haven. Nine days and nights, without a rest, Ulysses managed the helm. He dare not trust another, for fear of some disaster. Then Ithaca's shores stretched out their cliffs like white arms beckoning nearer. So far as one could judge a half day's sail would end the voyage. But Ulysses was exhausted and slumber fell upon him.

Now, the crew had long imagined that the bag was filled with treasures. They were anxious to make sure; and so, while their captain slept, they loosed the bag and opened it.

Forth rushed every wind to blow a furious gale. It spun their ships around and stirred up dire confusion. The East Wind forced them back in a zigzag course even to Æolia. The noise awoke Ulysses, who was angry beyond expression.

When once more they landed where Æolus had treated them kindly, Ulysses begged forgiveness for the foolish act of his men. But Æolus was offended and would lend no breeze at all. He drove them from his country, to make their way as best they might by bending to the oars.

IV. THE DISASTER AT LAMOS.

Six weary days the Grecians plied their oars, for no wind came to help them. To add to their discouragement they had lost their way. At last their hopes were brightened at sight of cliffs which rose abruptly from the sea. Though unknown to them it was Lamos, famed for giants, which they neared.

With energy renewed they rowed the fleet fast toward the land, marveling greatly at the entrance to the harbor; for on both sides there jutted seaward great, unbroken headlands which, farthest from the mainland, curved toward each other at the top in the shape of a mammoth arch. Beyond this arch a channel long and broad led to a spacious haven. Assured that if they were once inside this shelter nothing could disturb their vessels, they did not stop till all the ships, save one, were anchored close together.

Ulysses failed to enter with the rest, but fastened his ship with a cable to a towering rock outside. Then he climbed a neighboring peak, to learn, if possible, what people were on the island. The only sign of life he saw was distant smoke ascend-

ing. He therefore sent out two men whom he could trust to seek for information.

The two proceeded cautiously along a road, which led from hill to valley and, as tracks would indicate, was used for hauling wood. They soon met a young woman, so very tall and large that the men were pygmies in her presence. A spring, near by, made clear to them the object of her errand, for in her arms she bore a jar to be filled with running water The men thought from her bearing that she was the king's daughter, and asked her who her father was and where he dwelt. She did not deign to answer, but pointed with her finger to her father's high-roofed home.

When the men approached the house the queen came out to meet them, towering like a mountain peak and loathsome in appearance. She called for Antiphas, her husband. At once a fearful giant darted from concealment and seized a Greek, to kill him. The other lost no time in dashing back to his friends. Antiphas raised a loud alarm, and the woods resounded with yells as men of monstrous size hurried hither and thither.

The panting Greek had scarcely reached the fleet and spoken words of warning when, from crag and peak and mountain summit, massive stones were hurled upon the helpless ships. The crash of broken

timbers and shrieks of frightened sailors drowned the groans of dying men. As the bodies of the slain appeared floating on the water the savages plunged after them and bore them away to eat, as proud as fishermen who carry a catch of fish.

ANTIPHAS SLAYING A GREEK.

When their destructive work was ended, every ship was sunk and not a Greek was left alive of all that noble company.

Ulysses, alone with ship and crew outside the deceptive harbor, made haste to cut the cable and to hurry from the scene as fast as men with almost breaking oars could drive the ship along.

V. ULYSSES IN CIRCE'S PALACE

Ulysses sailed from Lamos with the single ship now left him and its crew of forty-four.

When land was seen again, they drew their vessel near and anchored; but, through dread and fear, they did not leave their ship for two long days and nights.

When the third day's light had come, Ulysses started out to try to find some game, for all his men were clamorous for meat. He traveled many miles, yet saw no animal. Suddenly he descried a cloud of smoke rising above a distant grove. For a moment he was glad, but for a moment only, since, with the smoke, came memories of Lamos. Should he go on alone, almost unarmed, or should he find his ship and then return with other men equipped to fight? The latter course seemed the wiser.

As he retraced his steps, a deer sprang from a thicket and ran along before him. A well-aimed lance pierced its back and stretched it on the ground. The beast was large and fat. With thongs he tied its feet together, threw it over his shoulders, and, using his spear for a staff, went back

to his companions. In enjoyment of their feast the men forgot their misfortunes and passed a pleasant day.

When night came on, Ulysses told them of the smoke and what he purposed doing. At first they would not listen. They brushed his plans aside. In spite of night and darkness they urged that sails be hoisted and the ship headed seaward. The fate of their companions at Lamos had cowed them; but Ulysses' will, as usual, had its way. At last it was decided that Eurylocus with some of the men should go to find the cause of the smoke, while the others should stay to watch the ship.

With light of day, Eurylocus and his men set out. In the distance loomed before them a mansion of polished stone, upon a rise of ground. Wolves and lions roamed at will around the house. They did not roar, or snarl, or show their teeth; instead, they wagged their tails and fawned as pet dogs do when a master gives them food. Near by were swine of every size, confined in sties, grunting, and crunching acorns.

Within the shining doors, which opened wide, a woman stood — Circe, Helios' daughter, of radiant beauty, with hair most like to sunlight's golden rays. Smiling, she bade them enter. The other men went in, but Eurylocus declined, and hastened

CIRCE AND THE SWINE.

to tell Ulysses the wonderful things he had seen.

Inside the palace were spacious rooms, adorned with art; while everywhere were couches, glistening with beautiful coverings. Seats of honor were given the men; before them were placed marble tables inlaid with gold, and these were loaded with tempting food and wine. Invited to partake, they eagerly consented. They did not know that in the wine, so pleasant to the taste, were fatal herbs which Circe used in changing men to beasts. They did not know that the lions and wolves and swine outside were once men like themselves. Within the sparkling wine was a tasteless drug. He who drank it forgot his name and home and history, yet did not lose his reason. He thought and wished and hoped, but could not help himself. At Circe's will, with touch of wand, he was lion or wolf or hog.

Soon the Greeks as swine were penned outside.

The tale which Eurylocus told seemed strange to Ulysses and his comrades. They waited in hope and fear; but when not one of their twenty-two comrades came back or sent them word, they were certain of some misfortune.

Ulysses started out to rescue his men if possible. Mercury met him on the way, in the likeness of a

youth, and placed a flower in his hand to charm "that Circe's witchcraft." As he came near the house Ulysses saw his former crew mingling with their kind. Even as he passed they were busy at their troughs.

Invited into the palace, he ate and drank when asked. But the wiles of Circe failed; the wine had no effect upon him. Mercury's flower was greater than Circe's subtle tricks. The goddess was amazed. At last she seemed to realize that Ulysses was before her. He drew his sword as though to take her life. She humbly begged for mercy. "My men must be restored," he said, "and harm must be far from me and mine while staying in this region."

With her magic wand she touched the swine and, one by one, the men stood up, in beauty and strength more striking than they had been before. Then followed joy and peace.

Twelve delightful months the ship was anchored there, and when the time was come for them to go, their boat was filled with food and gifts from Circe's bountiful store.

VI. THE VISIT TO THE KINGDOM OF THE DEAD.

The early Greeks believed that, when the body died, the soul took flight to Hades, a place beyond Oceanus, far down beneath the earth.

There dwelt all spirits, good and bad, who once had lived upon the earth — the good in one part, the bad in another. The home of the good was delightful, in the midst of groves and sparkling streams. The bad were doomed to punishment and torture.

Even in Grecian stories, a live man seldom saw that place and then came back to earth. But Homer gave his hero a view of that kingdom of the dead.

Tiresias, a famous seer, had died some years before and, though among the dead, was still honored by the gods; for other souls had neither bones nor flesh, but only what appeared to be the form they once had had, while he was just the same as he had ever been.

Circe told Ulysses that he must visit Hades and

obtain counsel from Tiresias, or never see his Ithaca again.

Ulysses sailed his ship to the mouth of Hades, then bade his friends adieu, and passed below. Women, men, and children thronged the place. Charon's oars were heard dipping in the Styx as

ULYSSES AMONG THE SHADES.

he rowed his spirit-laden boat across the swollen river.

The hero took his seat beside a narrow stream whose waters were of blood. Across upon the bank thin spirits sat in crowds, awe-struck to see a man alive within their dark abode. Ulysses knew a few of those who passed about, but only one, Tiresias, showed signs of knowing him. To him Ulysses

told his errand. The ageless prophet told him that many storms and woes should come from Neptune's hand for blinding Polyphemus; that if he could restrain his crew from injuring the oxen of the Sun he might yet reach the land he sought with all his crew alive, but if the men should harm one ox, that he alone without his ship should come at last to Ithaca.

Though saddened by the message, he rallied his faltering courage and asked about his mother. He yearned to speak with her, to tell his love, to feel her fond embrace.

Tiresias then beckoned to those across the stream, and they swarmed around Ulysses, plying him with questions. They asked of home, of dear ones, how affairs were moving, why he had come so soon, and how long his stay would be. Their queries were so many he could not answer them.

Of those who spoke to him, his mother pained him most. "Long time for thee, my son, I waited patiently," she said. "But when revolving years brought all the Greeks save thee I could not bear to live. No suffering wracked my frame. No sudden death befell me. I died of broken heart, pining for Ulysses, too long detained from home." Three times he reached his arms out lovingly, seeking to embrace her. Three times the phantom

faded, for not with mortal touch may spirits e'er be handled.

Elpenor hastened toward him, the only one of all the men who met his death at Circe's home. The day on which the ship set sail he lay asleep upon the housetop. Awakened by Ulysses' call, he jumped up hastily, stepped off the roof, and broke his neck. His spirit now begged Ulysses to see that his body was buried when the hero went back to earth. Agamemnon, too, was there, who was murdered on reaching Argos, and bore ill will in Hades against his wife and the cruel man who slew him.

Achilles also came. Ulysses was sad at seeing the greatest Grecian warrior, and he sought to comfort him. The toil was vain, for Achilles' only joy was strife and war, and in Hades there was no army to face nor any one to do his bidding.

Ajax was among the throng, and others whom Ulysses had known and loved at Troy.

Some distance off were spirits paying penalty for crimes committed on the earth. Tantalus, parched with thirst, stood in a stream which reached his chin; but, when he bent his head to drink, all the water disappeared. Again he stood erect, and the water, as before, invited him to drink. Hunger, too was pinching him. Trees bent low with luscious fruit, — apples, pears, and olives. The limbs seemed

just above his head, but when his hand reached out to pluck, the fruit was gone. When he withdrew his hand the boughs came near again, tempting him to taste.

Sisyphus pushed and tugged a heavy stone far up a steep incline to roll it over the summit, but as he neared the top the stone escaped his grasp and plunged again below. Weary and sore, the man went down, engaged in endless toil.

The sights and sounds were more than Ulysses could endure; so, though throngs of spirits hovered near and urged him to remain and satisfy their questions, he tore himself away.

He silently left Hades, and in silence joined his crew. Without a word to any one he launched his ship upon the deep.

VII. THE SONG OF THE SIRENS.

When Ulysses came from Hades back to earth, he remembered his promise to Elpenor. So he guided his ship to Circe's home and buried his companion, heaping up earth to mark the spot and planting upon the mound a spear with the point upward. One day sufficed for this. When Circe had told them of trials they must endure and how to avoid mishaps, they continued their perilous journey.

One day, as the ship was smoothly sailing, they spied land lying low upon the water. A nearer view revealed three beings, most like to women with gigantic wings. At once Ulysses called to mind the singing sirens of whom Circe had forewarned him. Without delay he set about to try the remedy against their wiles, for he knew well that thus alone could he and his escape alive. Taking a piece of wax, he filled the ears of all his men so that no sound could penetrate. Before he sealed the last man's ears he whispered something to him.

As they neared the gleaming island they saw a

sight that made their blood run cold; for everywhere lay human skulls and bones, some bleached, some partially decayed, while others had upon them still shriveled skin and even signs of flesh. This place no one had ever passed whose ears had heard the pensive strains of the singers sitting there.

THE SIRENS.

Ulysses quickly gave a signal; a man sprang forward, seized him, and tied him to the mast. The cords held Ulysses so fast that, struggle as he might, he could not free himself.

All this while the ship was gliding onward with the wind still fresh and strong; but scarcely had Ulysses been securely fastened when the breeze began to lull, and soon it died away. The vessel

almost stopped, and a song came floating over the sea — a song the most enchanting that musicians could invent. The words were compliments for warriors past and present, and for Ulysses first, the Greeks' most famous hero. The music grew in sweetness as these words were wafted over the water: "Let Ulysses land and hear his glory sounded. Give the man the treatment his splendid courage merits."

Ulysses was enraptured. He listened most intently. Forgetful of his warnings, he told his men to free him. Of course, their ears being stopped, they could not hear him, or the sirens. They plied their oars because the wind was down, and slowly forced the ship along the quiet waters. Ulysses shouted loudly and tried to make them hear. He entreated them, he coaxed, he begged; but not a man would slacken the hateful ropes. They could not understand. Then he frowned and tried to make his meaning clear by movements of his head and struggling limbs. Still the men refused. It seemed that he would burst his bonds, he was so full of rage.

The music grew fainter as the distance slowly lengthened. At last it ceased to reach them, and the island faded from sight. Then they released the captive. Ulysses was himself again. He was

glad enough to escape what must have proved his death. He tried to explain to his men the wonderful music to which he had been treated. They strained their ears, now opened, to catch the feeblest sound, but their good fortune had carried them beyond the very echo; for, if a single note had reached them, they might have changed their course and floated back to death.

VIII. SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS.

Some time afterward the voyagers came to another spot greatly to be dreaded. Circe had warned Ulysses of it, but he had not told his men lest all should fear the death that only six must meet.

Homer says that on the strait between Italy and Sicily there were two cliffs, one called Scylla, the other Charybdis. They stood upon opposite shores, yet were so near that an arrow shot from one could easily reach the other.

Scylla was a rock polished by the water to a surface like a mirror; so smooth, in fact, that it gave no hold for hand or foot to him who tried to climb. It reached up to the clouds which always hung above it.

A cave was half-way up its giddy height, within whose depths a female monster dwelt, hidden from mortal sight. Nothing that lives could hope to vie with her and escape death. This monster stretched her form far into the sea, its restless waters reaching only to her waist. She had twelve feet and six long necks, on each of which was set a frightful

head whose jaws contained three rows of huge black teeth. Sometimes these heads all barked like savage dogs gone mad. Both day and night the horrid necks stretched out to snatch whatever came within their reach, fish, or man, or ship, and the monstrous jaws crushed and mangled flesh or timber with equal ease.

SCYLLA.

Charybdis, although less high and frightful, was a thing to be shunned, at least six times a day; for, though near its base a great tree stood to offer welcome shade, yet thrice each day it swallowed with a whirlpool every drop of water for many rods around, leaving bare the rocks and weeds that lay upon the bottom of the sea. Should a vessel then

be passing, it was sure to be engulfed. Again, three times a day, with seething roar, Charybdis poured its gathered waters forth until the cliffs about were sprayed to their very summits. No floating thing could live in such a sea. For ages past, until Ulysses came, no vessel save the Argo, which sought the golden fleece, had ever sailed between these two in safety.

Ulysses was very anxious as he approached the narrow strait. Although warned that he must lose six men, he feared the ship might be delayed till Scylla's necks could reach out a second time, or, possibly, Charybdis wanted water.

Some of the sailors plied their oars to hurry the vessel through, while others walked the deck, awe-struck at sight of the cliffs. Ulysses, armed as if for battle, stood bravely at the prow. He knew of their impending loss and shrunk from the frightful scene.

The waters were smooth on the side next to Charybdis, and so he drove the vessel near her, keeping far from Scylla. They were almost through the passage when Ulysses' name was shrilly called, and cries for help were heard. He turned about and saw six men were being borne aloft in Scylla's savage jaws. Their struggling hands and feet wildly beat the air, and their screams

for rescue were awful to hear; but no arm was strong enough to lend them aid. A moment afterward the monster's heads withdrew, and the men were seen no more.

Before a second group could be snatched from the deck, the ship had passed between the cliffs and was once more out of danger.

IX. THE OXEN OF THE SUN.

After farther sailing, Ulysses and his comrades neared a strip of land from which were heard the lowing of cattle and the bleating of sheep. Ulysses had had so many trials that he sought to pass the island without attempting to land, for he felt sure that here the oxen of the Sun were pastured. His men, however, were stubborn and said they needed rest. Binding them all with a solemn oath to be content with what food the ship afforded and not to harm the oxen, he anchored there that night, intending with the morrow's dawn to leave the place in spite of what the crew might urge.

Now, when the morning came, the wind had ceased to blow. They waited there a month and yet no breeze sprang up to favor them. With each passing day the men grew more impatient. Abundant food and wine were left from Circe's generous gift when sailing from her island, but the men complained of ship fare and longed for something different. Each day, with bow and line, they sought for game and fish, but the sight of grazing oxen was sorely tempting them.

One morning, early in the second month, Ulysses strolled about the island, and, weary with his walk, lay down to rest. Soon he fell asleep and did not wake till day was well-nigh gone.

Meanwhile the men, made bold by his long absence, planned to violate their pledge. They thought that no great harm would come from slaying a few choice steers. They reasoned further that, should they sin by satisfying hunger, prayers and sacrifice would make the matter right. So they drove to their ship and slaughtered seven sleek, fat animals, and prepared a sumptuous feast. In their eagerness for meat, they failed so see what should have frenzied them: the hides of the slain beasts crawled about, the flesh was heard to moan while roasting on the spits, and sounds escaped from it like the lowing of troubled cattle.

When Ulysses, returning to the ship, smelled the odor of cooking flesh, his heart, for an instant, ceased to beat; for he knew too well what his crew had done and what it meant to them and him. But it was useless then to interfere; the steers were dead, and nothing could restore them.

The men feasted six days, and on the seventh spread the sails with confidence. Their leader knew that not for long would the sky be clear and the sea remain so calm. Soon the heavens were

darkened, and a storm of wind bore down, shrieking through the sails. The masts were snapped like bits of wood; the angry waters swept man after man from the deck. A thunderbolt smote the ship and split it wide asunder. Boat and crew disappeared beneath the swollen sea. Every man on board went down except Ulysses. He grasped a piece of timber, and, holding firmly to it, floated on the waves, the sole survivor of all the company that had sailed with him from Troy.

Nine days and nights the gallant hero battled with the waves. The spar once bore its burden straight to the mouth of Charybdis just as the savage monster was gulping down the waters. Ulysses saw his only hope and grasped a branch of the fig tree, then saw the timber quickly sink beneath him. There he hung in mid-air until the sun was setting, and his arms were painfully strained. At last the waters came rushing out, and with them the welcome beam. Dropping upon it, he was roughly tossed and driven far out to sea, but he never let go his hold, for he longed to reach his Ithaca.

X. THE VOYAGE FROM THE ISLE OF CALYPSO.

After his second escape from the awful chasm of Charybdis, Ulysses floated to Calypso's isle. The goddess who dwelt there was greatly pleased with him, and would gladly have made him her husband. She clothed him in goodly apparel and promised to make him immortal. Seven lingering years, against his will, he tarried on that isle and daily wept from loneliness.

Now when the time had come in the plans of the ageless gods for Ulysses to reach his home, Minerva persuaded Jupiter to hasten the event. At Jupiter's command Mercury left the sky, flew across the deep, and stood at Calypso's door.

The goddess was sweetly singing a song of love as she busied herself at the loom and wove with a shuttle of gold. Mercury sternly rebuked her for detaining the hapless hero, and demanded in Jupiter's name the speedy dismissal of Ulysses. Unwelcome though the message was, it had to be obeyed.

At once she planned a raft, broad and stanch and

DEPARTURE OF ULYSSES. (157)

able to withstand the waves. Trees were felled and hewn and solidly pinned together. A mast was raised, a rudder was shaped, and sails were made ready to hoist. Four days Ulysses toiled in the making of this raft. When at length it was launched, he was happy, for he thought that a goodly breeze would bear him swiftly homeward. Through seventeen days of calm he slowly moved along.

But Neptune's sleepless eye kept watch upon his hated victim. Then the god stirred up a storm. Black clouds swept the sky; the lightning flashed; the winds from every quarter seemed to meet in strife. The raging billows tossed the little raft hither and thither like a shuttlecock. It was raised to touch the clouds or driven to bottomless pits, as it rode the crest of a billow or plunged down into a trough. The sails were torn into shreds. The mast was snapped like a stick.

At length Ulysses was washed from his raft. He sank into the surging sea, but as he came to the surface he clutched his floating floor. His courage almost failed him. He wished he had died at Troy, been buried as a hero, and had not lived till now to drown in angry waters.

He had barely gotten his breath when, with frightful crash, a thunderbolt struck the groaning

craft, shattering it to splinters, and scattering it far and wide. As Ulysses fought his way amid the boiling waters, he seized a plank to ride upon, struggling manfully.

Four days and nights he rode astride this headless steed as it bore him in many a zigzag path. At last he heard the waves as they dashed against the rocks. As he was driven toward the shore, his plank was snatched away; so, battling with his arms, he strove to reach the land.

The surge would surely have crushed him against the frowning cliffs had not he fought his way to a remote but safer spot.

At last he reached the land, crawled feebly up the bank, and, finding a sheltered place among some thickly growing bushes, covered himself with leaves and slept the sleep of exhaustion.

XI. AT THE COURT OF KING ALCINOUS.

THE Phæacians lived on the island where Ulysses landed. Alcinous, their king, dwelt in a splendid palace, and was dearly loved by his people. Twelve princes shared his rule and counseled him. But perhaps the most revered in all the land was Arete, the queen; for her hand was ever generous, and her words were full of cheer.

Five children blessed the royal home. Of these, Nausicaa was the only daughter, and to her care was intrusted the linen of the household. The clothing was not washed at home, but was taken to a river, about two miles away, where a spring supplied clear water.

On the morning when Ulysses crept upon the shore and fell asleep among the bushes, Nausicaa and her maids drove with a wagon to this spot to do the accustomed washing. Their horses were unhitched to graze, while the women cleansed the clothing. They made glad work of their humble task, and laughed and talked as they spread the clothes upon the pebbly beach.

ULYSSES APPEALS TO NAUSICAA. (161)

While waiting for the clothes to dry, they ate their lunch and played at ball. They threw and caught the ball with skill; but once it passed beyond the catcher's reach and fell into the river. Then all the girls set up a scream as they saw their plaything float away.

The cry awoke Ulysses, who sat erect and glanced about to see from whence the noise had come. At last he ventured forth and told his need. Nausicaa gave him clothing and asked him to come to her father's house.

When the clothes were dried, Nausicaa started with her load, while Ulysses followed at a distance.

As he was walking on he met, as he supposed, a young girl bearing water. It really was Minerva in the likeness of a maid. She, unknown to him, was to guide him to the palace. In order that the two might not be stopped nor questioned in the town, she veiled Ulysses in a mist, so that, although he could both see and hear, his form could not be seen.

At the palace of Alcinous he found the king and queen and others, at a banquet. He entered without their notice, and bowed at Arete's knees. The mist then disappeared, and the feasters, in amazement, saw the stranger kneeling there.

Although Ulysses was not known to them, his

size and words and ways, convinced them that no common man was pleading at their court. They seated him upon a golden throne, and gave him food and wine. They asked his name and what his mission was. They urged his stay among them and promised gifts for every day that he would visit them. They sought in every way to make him happy: they celebrated games for him; they wrestled, and boxed, and ran, and jumped, and danced; they sang of Grecian heroes. They often spoke the name of Ulysses as they told of noble deeds, but he alone was conscious that Ulysses was their guest.

One day they challenged him to throw the discus. But when he sent the missile whizzing through the air, they ducked their heads in sudden fear; nor did the whirling discus stop until a hundred feet beyond the mark the best Phæacian man had made. Such matchless skill was new to them.

Prevailed upon at last, he told about the years that he had fought, the years that he had traveled. He also told his name and how he yearned for Ithaca.

A ship and safe return were promised him. The vessel that was fitted out was a strange one: no pilot guided her; she knew where she was bound, for she was self-directing. Then, too, she never

sailed by day, but, in one night, however dark, she went to any land, no matter how remote, and then came safely home before the dawn of day.

When the oars were fixed and the masts raised, they stretched the sheets of canvas, then brought on board a chest of gold and many costly presents. Ulysses slept upon the deck, while fifty youths plied vigorous oars and the ship sped on her way.

Within five hours they beached her upon the shores of Ithaca. Ulysses, still asleep, was borne from the ship and laid upon the land. His treasures were placed by his side. Then the vessel turned her prow to sea and sailed away.

Never should Poseidon's wrath again disturb Ulysses. Yet the sea god was not satisfied. He was angry with the Phæacians because they helped Ulysses. And this is how he showed his rage. At early dawn, the following day, crowds of Phæacians gathered to greet their returning vessel. They saw the noble boat gliding smoothly toward them. They welcomed her with cheers as she entered the harbor's mouth. But all at once Poseidon's hand rose up from out the sea and smote the ship upon the deck, driving the keel far downward. Still the hull and masts remained above the water. And there, the story goes, it stands to this day — a huge rock like a ship, completely blocking the harbor.

XII. THE SUITORS FOR PENELOPE'S HAND.

As Ulysses had now been absent for nearly twenty years, many of those at home had begun to think that he was dead. For many months no word had come from him. Rumors of various kinds reached Ithaca, but nothing definite was known; and even Penelope, his patient wife, had almost ceased to hope for his return.

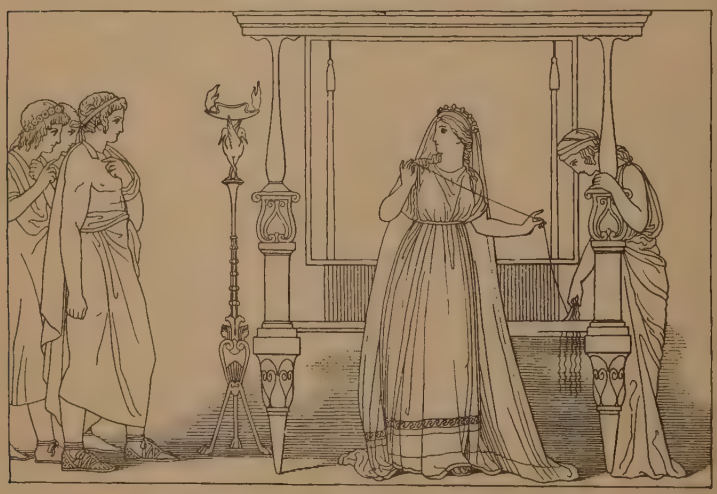
To add to her distress men from other parts of Greece had come to Ithaca to seek her hand in marriage.

Telemachus, the babe of twenty years ago, had grown to be a man. In many ways he was like his father, but when Ulysses sailed for Troy the authority of the realm was intrusted to those who seemed most competent to rule, and, in these later years, some of the wisest ones had died; so that younger and more ambitious men now held the reins of government. Because of this condition of things Telemachus was ignorant of his actual rights, and his advice was scarcely heeded.

For two years the unwelcome suitors had stayed at the palace of Ulysses, supplying their wants from

the king's abundant store. Penelope was unable to drive them away. At last they grew so bold as to demand that the queen should choose a husband from among them.

To still their clamor, Penelope promised them that her choice would be made known when she had



PENELOPE SURPRISED BY THE SUITORS.

finished a shroud she was weaving for the father of Ulysses. For several months she deceived them; what she wove during the day she for the most part unraveled at night, so that the garment made but little progress. At length, however, the suitors discovered the ruse, and a day was named when she

must take the step which she both loathed and dreaded.

One day, while the suitors were talking very loudly and making angry threats, Minerva came to Telemachus and told him to end this strife. She made him see that if Ulysses was dead, the safety of the kingdom and his mother's future happiness must depend on him. Therefore he must learn if possible his father's actual fate, so that he might perform the task as became one nobly born and reared.

Accordingly that night, while his mother lay awake, disturbed by thoughts of what must soon befall her, the young man set sail in a stately ship, manned with a crew of twenty, to learn from Nestor all that was surely known about his father.

After a swift voyage, he found the old hero, who gave him a cordial welcome for his father's sake. But his story was quickly told and carried little comfort. Ulysses had been most valiant throughout the war, and, at its close, now ten years past, had sailed for home with a splendid fleet. Nestor knew nothing of all that had happened since.

Convinced that his father was dead, Telemachus started back to Ithaca. In the midst of this night of gloom an omen of hope appeared in the flight of a passing eagle. Minerva, too, often came to cheer

him as some kind friend in whom he had great confidence.

The suitors were at last aroused to a dread of this young man. Until a few days since he was easily swayed by them, but now he dared to man a boat and sail across the sea. They boldly sent out a fleet to overtake his ship and destroy it with its captain. But, guided by Minerva's hand, the hero passed them all and reached Ithaca in safety.

As soon as he had landed he sent the crew to tell the news, while he himself walked hastily to the humble hut of Eumæus, his father's faithful swineherd. There he found a stranger, but who he was and what was said are told in another chapter.

XIII. HELEN AT HER HOME IN ARGOS.

TELEMACHUS, while seeking news of Ulysses, visited the palace of Menelaus, in the kingly city of Argos.

As his chariot drew near he heard the sound of music and the dancers' feet merrily keeping time. A feast was being held to celebrate the marriage of Achilles' son with Menelaus' daughter.

The feasters did not know who the stranger was, yet they gave him a hearty welcome and seated him at their board. As they proceeded with the banquet the bard proclaimed in song the glorious deeds of Ulysses, and the face of Telemachus was bathed in tears as he heard of his father's prowess in the years gone by. Menelaus marked his sadness, but could not find a reason, for surely every Greek should be proud of such a warrior.

While he debated what to do, beautiful Helen entered the room where they were seated. Twenty years of changing fortunes had not dimmed the brightness of her eyes nor faded the bloom upon her cheeks. All arose and stood to do her honor: one placed for her a carven chair; another brought

HELEN.

a covering made of soft and costly wool; a third bore a silver basket cunningly rimmed with gold, one of many gifts received from distant Egypt.

When she was duly seated and her sandaled feet were placed upon a polished stool, the basket was filled with fine spun yarn and placed upon her lap, and a distaff was given to her. She busied herself at her work; but when she glanced at the stranger she gave a sudden start, as if she had seen him before. Some time she scanned his features and manly form with interest, and then in excitement said, "My friends, this stranger is surely Telemachus, son of mighty Ulysses."

In a moment the feasters crowded about their guest. Honors were showered upon him. The king outdid them all in his devoted attention. The company's pleasure increased with the presence of Telemachus. Yet the meeting was a sad one, for it brought to memory troubles which, though suffered long ago, were bitter when recalled.

They entertained each other with tales of what had happened at Troy and since. None could draw a tear or raise a hearty laugh as could the fair-haired Helen, since, now that she had come to her former home as queen, they loved her for her beauty and for her golden speech.

Telemachus told the group about his father's

absence and of his fears for him. He told them also how the suitors robbed the palace halls and sought the hand of his mother. The wedding dance and song would have ended in a wail, for their sympathy was stirred, had not Helen mixed with the wine they drank a drug which banished grief. Thus one and all, this night at least, forgot the past with its sadness. They laughed and danced and sang until the stars announced the dawn.

XIV. HOW MENELAUS FOUGHT WITH PROTEUS.

Among the stories told Telemachus while at the palace of Menelaus was one by the king himself.

He said that, in traveling back from Troy, trying to reach his home, he came one day to an island, Pharos, lying close to Egypt. There he stayed full twenty days, for not a breath of air arose to fill the sails of his ships. Why delayed so long he could not tell, till Proteus' daughter said, "To find the cause and cure, ensnare and conquer father."

Now Proteus was a being whom any one might dread, however fond of strife. He did not fight like other men, but changed his form and ways as suited best his purpose. The king was sure, however, that he could chain the beast; so, choosing three companions, at midday as directed, he covered the four with sealskins. Though well-nigh dead with heat and awful smell of oil, they dug out beds in which to lie upon the scorching beach.

There the four lay buried, awaiting the mighty Proteus; for each day at noon as they were told, he

came from out the sea and went among the seals, feeling them over carefully, counting them on his fingers, and then lay down among them like a shepherd with his flock.

Proteus came as was expected and patted his pets, including the Greeks, whom he mistook for seals. Satisfied that all was well, he hollowed out a place and soon fell fast asleep. Stealthily the Greeks crawled from their beds of sand; quietly they laid aside the skins, and then all four together jumped upon the sleeper and tried to hold him still.

At first he seemed to be some demon of the sea, but soon they found themselves contending with a lion. Again, the lion vanished, and, in his place, a dragon crawled and writhed and hissed. Next the dragon was a leopard, which snarled and sprang from side to side. Soon the leopard was a boar whose tusks were fearful weapons. The boar then changed to water, a madly rushing river, hard to hold; and last of all, the river ceased to flow, but, where its stream had been, a massive tree arose with gnarled, wide-spreading branches, hard to keep from moving. All these and many other shapes the wily Proteus took in order to escape. Still the valiant Greeks would not give up the struggle, but battled manfully.

At last the monster yielded, and, panting hard

between his words, he asked them what they wanted.

When Menelaus told his wish to know the cause of their detention, he said: "Ye seek too many things from Troy as treasures for yourselves, and do not give the gods enough. Be good to them and share your gifts in generous sacrifice. Soon, then, will breezes blow." Not only did he tell them this, but many other things which they had failed to learn: how many of their comrades who had fought with them at Troy had reached their homes in safety, how countless others perished as they journeyed, and how Ulysses was imprisoned upon Calypso's isle.

He planned for them the course their ships must take, and warned them to beware of trials yet in store; then plunged into the sea and disappeared from view.

XV. ULYSSES AT ITHACA.

Until dawn Ulysses lay by the roadside soundly sleeping, his treasures piled about him. When he awoke he gazed around in wonder, for nowhere could he see the ship nor sign of any Phæacian. The shore looked unfamiliar, the road was dim, while everything seemed indistinct and shadowy.

Minerva had veiled the spot with clouds, that he might not see his palace till she had counseled him.

As he sat there, still complaining of his ill-luck, he saw what seemed to be a shepherd coming near. The youth was young and strong. In answer to his questions, the shepherd said, "The spot on which you stand is rugged Ithaca, famed throughout the world for Ulysses and his deeds at Troy."

Ulysses was as crafty as ever, and hid the joy he felt, for he was guarding his gold. He told a cunning story: how he had heard of such a place when far away in Crete, where he was born; how, when he killed a man, he ran away from home and sought the aid of strangers. Minerva smiled, for she it was, as she listened to his tale, and even as she smiled she changed in form from a shepherd to a woman. Then Ulysses knew her and almost burst with

gladness, for not since Troy was burned had she appeared in person, though often standing by him in the likeness of a mortal.

She helped him find a cave close by in which were placed securely the chest and other treasures, the generous gifts of Phæacians. Then the goddess sat and planned with him the work which he had still to do before his people should know and formally welcome him.

She told him how the suitors were harassing his palace, robbing his lordly treasury, and seeking Penelope's hand. She told him, too, that in her strength he might attack and conquer them; that faithful Eumæus, his swineherd, dwelt not far away, and that Telemachus should join his father there.

Ulysses cheerfully assented to all her arrangements.

She touched him with her wand and changed him to a beggar, old and bent in form and clad in faded garments. Then she went away, while painfully and slowly Ulysses sought the lowly hut of Eumæus the swineherd.

The swineherd greeted him heartily, gave him food and shelter, and listened to the story of his travels; for Ulysses played the part of a Cretan wanderer whose exploits had been many.

ULYSSES AND EUMÆUS.

XVI. ULYSSES AS A BEGGAR.

You will remember that when Telemachus returned from his fruitless search for his father, he dismissed his ship and set out for the swineherd's hut, guided by Minerva and cherishing the hope that Ulysses was still alive.

It was early morning as he approached the low-roofed home. Eumæus and Ulysses were seated within, arranging the day's work. As he entered the door, Eumæus in surprise let fall the bowl in which he had been mixing wine, and joyfully grasped the young man's hand in token of welcome; for his heart was filled with gladness to see his young lord's safe return.

Ulysses, the beggar, painfully arose to give his seat of honor to the master. This the youth declined, for he deferred to age, though the stranger were a poor man. "Pĕnēlŏpē," the father thought, "has trained her boy to such politeness," for he knew well that he was in the presence of his son; yet neither Telemachus nor Eumæus suspected that the stranger was Ulysses.

The swineherd went to his tasks, while the others

for a long time sat and talked. When the father saw that his son was a brave man and to be trusted,

ULYSSES AND TELEMACHUS.

he made himself known at once. Telemachus could not believe that the beggar was Ulysses until

Minerva's wand had changed his rags to kingly robes and made him straight and strong. They laughed and cried together. They could have sat for hours, for there was much to tell; but, saving this for the future, they talked about the suitors, and how to punish them. Then Telemachus went to the palace, while Ulysses remained at the hovel. There the swineherd found him as ragged as he had left him, for Minerva's magic wand a second time had changed him.

Soon Eumæus and the beggar started to the town. When they neared the palace gate a dog was lying there, too old and weak to bark; but, as the two drew near, the beast got up; he sniffed the air and wagged his tail, then stretched his length upon the ground and died.

It was the pet dog which Ulysses had left behind him twenty years ago. Though for months the animal had scarcely seen at all, yet when his master came he knew that it was he.

The hero's eyes were filled with tears, and he would fain have stopped to stroke the noble head and call the dog by name, but he must not yet reveal himself even to Eumæus.

Arrived within the palace, the beggar went about among the suitors, asking bits of bread and meat. Some threw him food accompanied

with jeers. His eye, though dim to look upon, was sharp to see, and he remembered every man who treated him unfairly.

ULYSSES AND HIS DOG.

Antinous the most of all aroused his latent hate for, in a fit of rage, he flung a footstool at Ulysses. And so, insulted and abused, he passed from each to each, accepting whatever food was offered.

XVII. THE FIGHT WITH IRUS.

A COMMON beggar named Arnæus made daily visits to the suitors' feast to get what they would give. He went by the nickname Irus, which means a runner of errands. Coming to his accustomed place, he found Ulysses sitting there, and, considering him an intruder, was angry that another should trespass upon what he called his rights. He frowned upon Ulysses and ordered him to hurry off or he would drag him by the heels. The scowl and cutting words were noticed by the suitors, who thought it sport to see huge Irus grow so fierce, for heretofore he had been noted only for his bulk and for boundless appetite.

Ulysses felt his helplessness and asked for mercy from the monster. Irus knew no mercy, but boldly started toward him as if to carry out the threat which he had made. Meanwhile, the suitors, crowding round, winked and smiled and urged him on.

Ulysses at last was aroused and refused to stir from their midst. He saw that he must fight or leave the banqueting hall.

When all were sworn to see fair play, Ulysses made a gesture as though to better gather his tattered clothes around him. A laugh had passed about at the weakness of his figure, but lo! the flesh now seen was fair and young, the muscles were like

ULYSSES AND IRUS.

cords; the body once so bent and vilely clad now stood erect and neatly robed, because again Minerva's wand had touched his feeble frame.

Irus stood aghast and would have fled had not some young men pushed him on and forced him into place. There he stood, with trembling lips and knees that plainly shook.

A ring was hastily marked, and the two stood facing each other, with their hands uplifted for

battle, while bets were made by the suitors, pretending to have their favorite.

Irus finally braced himself and struck a fearful blow upon Ulysses' shoulder. Before the ponderous arm could strike a second time the mighty fist of Ulysses had landed on Irus' neck. It hit just back of the ear and tore the flesh from the sinews and crushed the very bones.

Irus fell to the ground, groaning and spitting blood. Roughly Ulysses dragged him outside the lordly hall, then placed him in sitting position, his back against the wall. In mockery he placed a warrior's spear within his quivering hands and left him staring into space — a sight to frighten dogs.

The suitors patted the victor heartily upon the back and called him a splendid fellow for ridding them of a nuisance. They joked and laughed about the fight. They promised him, as a reward, all that he could eat and the privilege of begging there; for, when the fight was over, he was again the ragged vagabond, hungry and needing help.

XVIII. HOW ULYSSES WAS RECOGNIZED BY THE NURSE.

PENELOPE had heard how a beggar, from a strange land, as he claimed, had presented himself at the banquet. She had heard, too, how the suitors abused the unfortunate creature, and her sympathy was awakened. Then, too, as report asserted, the stranger had met Ulysses in some far away land as he traveled. So, when the feast was ended and the so-called guests had departed, she ordered the hall put in order and a cheerful fire lighted. Then she sent for the beggar and commanded him to be seated.

The stranger's way of sitting reminded her of some one she had met and known before. But, dismissing such a thought as impossible, she bade him tell of Ulysses. The fellow at first seemed uneasy, but gentle words from the queen soon won from him his story.

He told how he had lived one time in distant Crete and had owned a goodly palace, and how misfortune had come and driven him from his home. He said Ulysses came there to visit as his

PENELOPE. (187)

guest; that only lately, too, he had heard of the famous man as being still alive, though all his ships had gone down, and every comrade had perished. He declared that not another moon would wane until the hero should return enriched with costly treasures.

Penelope was delighted, since never a tale so plausible had been told in all these years, though many had come to her court with stories about Ulysses.

To test the truth of his statements, she asked the seeming beggar to describe the apparel which her husband had commonly worn when visiting in Crete.

The beggar again grew restless and feigned that memory failed him, for nearly a score of years had passed since he had seen the clothing. But soon he called to mind each garment's shape and color.

The deception was complete, for he described the very robes his wife had made for him when he set out for Troy.

Penelope could not conceal the emotion which she felt, and Ulysses was so deeply stirred to see her sad distress that he almost determined to end it all by declaring, "Here is Ulysses." But Minerva had solemnly warned him that ere Penel-

ope knew him he must "slay those who knew him not."

The queen gave directions to bathe the welcome stranger and to give him comfortable quarters, then seemed to forget his presence as her mind lived over the past.

At this interview an incident occurred which might have spoiled the hero's careful plans. As was the custom there, an aged woman bathed him. On his leg she found a scar made many years before. The accident had happened thus: Ulysses, when a mere lad, was one day fiercely attacked by a wild boar and received an ugly cut upon his leg. A faithful nurse cared for him long and patiently. The wound healed at last, but a scar remained which, once seen, would always be remembered. The nurse who waited on him then still served his noble wife, and it chanced that she was the one assigned to wash his feet as he ended his talk with Penelope. There was something about the beggar that reminded her of Ulysses, and she expressed as much; but he answered her, with a smile, that others had said the same.

As she was bathing his feet her eyes, as I have said, caught sight of the mark. Fearful that a spirit and not a living person was before her, she rashly dropped his foot, noisily upsetting the basin

and spilling the water about. Ulysses quickly covered her mouth with his hand, while his eyes looked warningly into hers, staring wildly at him. She was seeing her master and knew it.

Penelope was thinking so deeply that she failed to note the disturbance. Ulysses hurriedly whispered warnings to the nurse not to reveal, by word or sign, who she thought he was. The hero then retired to rest, thankful that Penelope had failed to know him, and that what he had hoped to do was still within his power.

XIX. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SUITORS.

And now had come the time dreaded by Penelope — the day which she had set for the selection of her husband. The queen awoke from a troublous sleep and early went to the hall, where all the suitors were gathered.

In those days they had stone axes, through each of which a hole was drilled where they fastened the handle. It had been agreed that twelve of these axes should be placed in a row, and that the man who first shot an arrow through them all should be Penelope's chosen husband.

As they placed the axes in readiness Penelope was uneasy, but the beggar seemed indifferent; still, nothing escaped his notice.

When at last the bow was brought the stranger gave a start, then settled back in his place. The suitors were annoyed to recognize Ulysses' bow, that for twenty years had hung neglected upon the peg where he had left it.

They saw at once the need of strength to bend the thing so that the string would reach from tip to tip. They almost came to blows before they

could decide who should be the first to shoot, for each was slow to lose his chance of winning the coveted prize. At last they allowed Telemachus to test his father's bow. But when he tried to string it he found the task too great and had to give it up. The suitors heartily laughed to see his face grow red and the veins enlarge with his efforts. Then one after another tried, but the bow refused to bend enough for the string to reach. They rubbed it well with oil and worked it back and forth with hope of limbering it, but still it would not yield.

Finally a shrewd old fellow, who had not taken his turn, but who reasoned that oil well soaked into wood might make the bow more supple, proposed they do no more until the following day. After debate and hesitation it was decided so, but the beggar suddenly arose and asked to try the bow before the eager crowd.

At first they laughed at such a thought, then sneered and would have forced him from the hall had not Penelope said, "Do let the beggar try." "Of course," said she, "he could not hope to claim my hand, even though he should succeed, for queens should never marry beggars; so let the poor man try if only for amusement."

The request was granted because the queen had

favored it. Ulysses took the bow, carefully turned it over, examined it inch by inch to see if worms perchance had eaten and weakened it at some point. He tested it with his knees and sprung it back and forth, fondling it as a child that had been lost and found. The suitors smiled at his conduct and thought he was highly flattered in handling such a bow. When assured that it was as strong as when he hung it on the wall, now twenty years ago, he placed one end upon the ground and bore his weight upon it until the bow bent double.

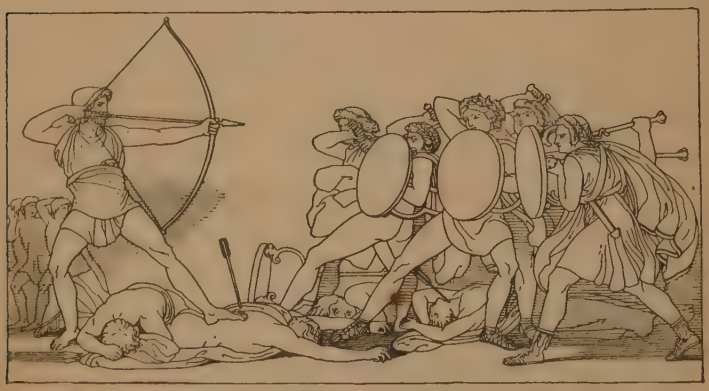
The suitors were dumb with amazement; but when, fitting an arrow to the string, he sent it whizzing through the axes, they looked at each other in terror, almost unable to move. Penelope withdrew, for she did not know Ulysses, and her mind was filled with forebodings.

Now the crisis had come. It was the work of a moment to send a second arrow, which struck an offensive suitor. His comrades thought the shot was accidental, and, with many threats, they rushed upon the beggar, but Minerva came to his aid. In an instant the beggar's clothes were changed; his form was made erect, and there they saw before them their mighty king, Ulysses, whom they had thought to be dead.

Terrible was his frown. His eyes blazed like

coals. With few but emphatic words he told them that now they must suffer the penalty of wrongs done to him and his.

They earnestly begged for mercy and pledged their future friendship. But, faster than the minutes passed, arrows flew from his bow and



ULYSSES KILLING THE SUITORS.

every shot was deadly. The suitors dashed hither and thither, seeking exit from the building, but every door had been fastened; then they darted under tables and hid behind the bodies of the slain to escape from the terrible missiles.

At last the arrows were spent, and the few suitors still living seized weapons of every sort and rushed upon the hero. Ulysses, however, was ready, for other weapons in plenty were near him, having been

placed there by the faithful Eumæus. With his back against the doorpost, he sent spear after spear among them, each tipped with death for its victim.

To add to their awful confusion, the ægis of dread Minerva was seen spread out above them. This the suitors knew meant safety for Ulysses and death to all who opposed him.

When the battle was ended the floor was a pool of blood, while of all the suitors and their train only two were left alive; one a loyal bard, the other a faithful page. The rest lay scattered about upon the floor — a sight most fearful to see. Ulysses had slain those who knew him not.

XX. ULYSSES AND PENELOPE.

PENELOPE, as you remember, had left the hall before the slaughter began. Secluded in her chamber, far away from the tumult, she knew nothing further of what Ulysses had done.

When the corpses were removed and the hall was set in order, the nurse rushed to her mistress' room to tell her that Ulysses was really at home. She said that the seeming beggar was he, and related, as proof of the fact, how she had found the scar and how the suitors had been slain.

Adorning herself with jewels, the queen reënters the hall and finds the noble hero seated there in silence. His son stands at his side, expecting the mother to greet the conqueror with gladness. He is, however, doomed to disappointment, for neither does the hero raise his head, nor does the wife address him. Her heart will not allow her tongue to speak. The son upbraids her with her coldness, but Ulysses understands her doubts and bids the youth withdraw.

The hero commands that pleasing music be started, and sounds of moving feet are heard as

though a dance were going on to celebrate a wedding. People passing the palace suppose that Penelope has chosen her husband. Ulysses has never looked grander, for Minerva's magic wand has endowed him with special grace and beauty.

MEETING OF ULYSSES AND PENELOPE.

Penelope casts glances at the hero seated there, and thinks he looks as Ulysses might have looked with twenty lingering years added to his age. Still, so often has she hoped and found her hopes were idle, that even now, with Ulysses here, she dares not yet believe. To make a final test she calls: "Come here, good nurse, and bring within the bed Ulysses wrought, then throw upon it sheets and quilts prepared for strangers' use."

At this command Ulysses rises and quickly says, "Now that can never be; no mortal man that ever lived could move from its appointed place that lofty bed of former years." He then goes on to tell how each part was fashioned; how gold and silver and bronze were laid on every post and leg to make the bedstead splendid.

Before his tale is done, with outstretched arms she rushes to the speaker and, kissing him, cries out, "Thou art indeed my Ulysses, my long-lost, beloved husband." No words can tell their joy at meeting after all these years of trial.

At last they take their seats to talk over what has happened. Far into the night they carry on their earnest conversation. Ulysses tells of the people he has seen; of the monsters he has met on land and sea; and how, wherever he went, his heart still longed for Ithaca, his native home, and Penelope, the best of women. She, too, has much to say of yearnings for her husband, of numberless griefs and sorrows; but, most of all, of how her love for home and him has kept her always patient and given her needed strength.

Ulysses' wanderings are over; Penelope's faithful waiting has its reward; she is still the beautiful queen, the devoted wife of Ulysses, who again is king of Ithaca.

PROPER NAMES PRONOUNCED

Achilles, ȧ-kĭl lēz.
Æneas, ē-nē′*as*.
Æolus, ē′ō-lŭs.
Æolia, ē-ō′lĭ-ạ.
Æthiopia, ē-thi̯-ō′pĭ-ạ.
Agamemnon, ăg-ȧ-mĕm′nŏn.
Ajax, ā′jăks.
Alcinous, ăl-sĭn′ō-ŭs.
Andromache, ăn-drŏm′ȧ-kē.
Antinous, ăn-tĭn′ō-ŭs.
Antiphas, ăn′tĭ-f*as*.
Apollo, ȧ-pŏl′lō.
Arete, ȧ-rē′tē.
Arnæus, är-nē′ŭs.
Argo, är′gō.
Argos, är′gŏs.
Aulis, ạ′lĭs.

Bellerophon, bĕl-lĕr′ō-fŏn.
Bœotia, bē-ō′shạ.
Bryseis, brī-sē′ĭs.

Calchas, kăl′kăs.
Calypso, kȧ-lĭp′sō.
Charybdis, kȧ-rĭb′dĭs.
Chiron, kī′rŏn.
Chrysa, krĭ′sạ.
Chryseis, krī-sē′ĭs.
Circe, sĕr′sē.
Clytemnestra, klī-tĕm-nĕs′trȧ.
Crete, krēt.
Cretan, krē′t*an*.
Cyclops, sī′klŏps.
Cyclopes, sī-klō′pēz.

Diana, dī-ā′nȧ.
Diomedes, dī-ō-mē dēz.
Dione, dī-ō′nē.
Dolon, dō′lŏn.

Egypt, ē′jĭpt.
Egyptian, ē-jĭp′sh*an*.
Elpenor, ĕl-pē′nŏr.
Eubœia, ū-bē′ạ.
Eumæus, ū-mē′ŭs.
Eurylocus, ū-rĭl′ō-kŭs.

Glaucus, glâū′kụs.
Greek, grēk′.
Grecian, grē′shan.

Hades, hā′dēz.
Hector, hĕk′tēr.
Helen, hĕl′ĕn.
Helios, hē′lĭ-ŏs.
Homer, hō′mēr.

Ida, ī′dạ.
Ino, ī′nō.
Iphigenia, ĭf-ĭ-jē-nī′ȧ.
Iris, ī rĭs.
Irus, ī′rŭs.
Italy, ĭt′ạ-lĭ.
Ithaca, ĭth′ạ-kạ.

Juno, jū′nō.
Jupiter, jū′pĭ-tẽr.

Lamos, lā′mŏs.
Laodocus, lā-ŏd′ŏ-kŭs.
Lycia, lis′ĭ-ą.

Machaon, mă-kā ŏn.
Mars, märz.
Menelaus, mĕn-ē-lā′ŭs.
Mercury, mẽr′kū-rў.
Minerva, mĭ-nẽr′vą.
Myrmidon, mẽr′mĭ-dŏn.

Nausicaa, nạ-sĭk ā-ą.
Neptune, nĕp′tūn.
Nereus, nē′rūs.
Nestor, nēs′tŏr.

Olympus, ŏ-lĭm′pŭs.
Olympian, ŏ-lĭm′pĭ-*an*.

Palamedes, păl-ą-mē dēz.
Pandarus, păn′dą-rŭs.
Paris, păr′ĭs.
Patroclus, pą-trō klŭs.
Peleus, pē′lūs.
Penelope, pē-nĕl′ŏ-pē.
Phæacia, fē-ā′shą.
Phæacian, fē-ā′sh*an*.
Pharos, fā′rŏs.
Phœnix, fē′nĭks.
Polyphemus, pŏl-ĭ-fē′mŭs.
Poseidon, pō-sī′dŏn.

Priam, prī′ăm.
Proteus, prō′tē-ŭs.
Pyrrha, pĭr′ą.

Rhesus, rē′sŭs.

Scæan, skē′*an*.
Scylla, sĭl′ą.
Sicily, sĭs′ĭ-lĭ.
Sinon, sī′nŏn.
Siren, sī′rĕn.
Sisyphus, sĭs′ĭ-fŭs.
Sthenelus, sthĕn′ē-lŭs.
Styx, stĭks.

Tantalus, tăn′tą-lŭs.
Tartarus, tär′tą-rŭs.
Tauris, tą′rĭs.
Teiresias, tī-rē′sī-*as*.
Telemachus, tē-lĕm′ą-kŭs.
Teucrus, tū′krŭs.
Thetis, thē′tĭs.
Thersites, thẽr-sī′tēz.
Thracian, thrā′sh*an*.
Troy, troi.
Trojan, trō′j*an*.

Ulysses, ū-lĭs′sēz.

Venus, vē′nŭs.
Vergil, vẽr′jĭl.
Vulcan, vŭl′c*an*.

Xanthus, zăn′thŭs.

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